REST
FOR THE
HEAVY-LADEN:
PROMISED
By our only Lord and Saviour
JESUS CHRIST
TO ALL
SINCERE BELIEVERS,
Practically Diſcourſed upon.

By CLEMENT ELIS,
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Author of *Chriſtianity in ſhort*.

HEBR. iv. 1. *Let us therefore fear, leſt a Promiſe being left us of entering into his Reſt, any of you ſhould ſeem to come ſhort of it.*

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BRITISH MUSEUM

TO THE

READERS.

WHEN the charitable Samaritan *had found the poor Man lying wounded by the Way-ſide, and ready to die for want of preſent Help: his* Compaſſion *might poſſibly have come too late, had it ſtaid for* Ceremony. *Had he ſpent his Breath in Complements, and trifled away the Time to uſher in his Kindneſs with many fine Words; had he ſtood excuſing his Boldneſs or his too much Officiouſneſs, apologizing for his Weakneſs, or with a great deal of* Rhetorick, *courting the poor dying Soul to accept of Life: However, we (who know better how to talk than to do good) might now call him* Modiſh, *He that ſo much needed his Help, would have thought him* idle *and* impertinent, *and more a* Courtier, *than*

than a Friend, *that durſt not do him good till he had begged his Leave to doe it. But he did the Part of a true* Friend. *His Eye no ſooner ſaw, but his Heart pitied, and* Pity *ſet him a Work. To bind up his Wounds, to pour in Oil and Wine, to accommodate him with his own Beaſt, and a convenient Lodging, and to provide for his Cure at his own Charge.*

And the Deſign of this followiug Diſcourſe *is to do the like good Office to Men's* Souls, *as he did to the poor Man's* Body. *Theſe have fallen among* Thieves, *too, by whom they have been* ſtripped and wounded: *and the good* Samaritan, *that alone can both* cloath *and* heal *them, is no other but* JESUS CHRIST, *the Saviour of the World, who came on purpoſe to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt. This he can do immediately by* himſelf, *but this he doth ordinarily by his* Inſtruments, *whom he hath ordained to Miniſter unto him in the Cure of Souls: And by their* Miniſtry *he poureth both the* Oil *and the* Wine *into the Soul that's wounded, either* by *Sin or* for *it. In this needful Office, I deſire to ſerve* him, *and to do what good I am able to all that need it; and had rather be* doing

than

than apologizing *for what I do, or like a* Mountebank, *telling the World what Feats I am able or hope to perform. So that, if the* Bookſeller *had not more than I, deſired to be in the* Faſhion, *I had not troubled you with one Word by Way of* Preface.

If the Book, *anſwer the* Title, *and ſhew indeed where the* Heavy Laden *may find* Reſt, *the* Title *doth ſufficiently commend the* Book. *Whatever it be that is here done, now that I have offered it to your* View, *I muſt leave it to your* Judgment, *whether I will or no. And I do expect, that every one will judge of it as he is affected; and judge as you pleaſe, I am not concerned for my own Credit, nor any otherwiſe than* he, *who having made the beſt Proviſion he was able for the Entertainment of his Friends, ſeeth but Few of them eat heartily, and all the reſt too nice, and dainty to taſte of any Thing he hath ſet before them; and ſome of them deriding the homely Fare. His Deſign was* Friendſhip, *and if it be otherwiſe taken, he is ſorry for it; but ſatisfieth himſelf with this, that he cannot help it.*

How little need ſoever there may be of ſuch Helps as this in other Parts of the

the World, I cannot chuſe but ſee in this little Corner of it, which lieth under my Eye, a great many of thoſe that would be called Chriſtians, *who ſufficiently need what I here have endeavoured to doe for for them. I cannot but* pity *them, and how can I do ſo, and not afford them my beſt Aſſiſtance; in pointing them out the Way to* Him, *who ſo lovingly invites them, and hath in Readineſs for them, all that they can need or deſire? If any of them will not accept of my Kindneſs, the worſt that I wiſh them is this; that they may not however loſe the Benefit of that free and gracious* Invitation, *which is herein commended unto them. It is the bleſſed* JESUS, *who ſhed his precious* Blood *to* redeem *our Souls from Death, that here invites to* Reſt, *and* Life, *and* Happineſs; *I am no more, but the Unworthieſt of thoſe his Servants, who, at his Command, bid Men to the Feaſt, and ſay what he hath enabled me to perſwade them to come, and direct them in the Way.*

What you are to expect in this Diſcourſe, *the* Contents *will tell you; and all that I ſhall now tell you more, is only this, that I cannot wiſh myſelf any greater* Happineſs, *than I am confident I have pointed out unto you.*

you. As many of you as desire to be good *and* safe, *will* love *and* pray *for him that doth his best to make you so, and will heartily join with him in this Prayer to the great* God *of all true* Peace *and* Comfort, *That he would enable us all by his holy* Spirit *to go on constantly, and chearfully, running the Race that he hath set before us, till we obtain the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls through* Jesus Christ *our* Lord. *Amen.*

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REST

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REST
FOR THE
HEAVY-LADEN.

MATT. xi. 28.

Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy-laden, and I will give you Rest.

The INTRODUCTION.

IF we Sinners were but half so sensible of our miserable Condition by Nature, and of that *heavy Load* of Sin which lieth upon our Souls, as our most gracious *JESUS* is ready and willing to ease us of it, there would be no need of any Arguments to persuade us, with

all Earneſtneſs of Mind, to attend unto theſe Words now read unto us: Seeing they bring in them ſo obliging an Invitation from the *Lord* of Life and *God* of all Comforts, to every one of us, without Exception, to accept of that very Mercy and Grace which we moſt need; together with a very good Aſſurance, that we ſhall not go without them, if we will but be at that reaſonable Pains, to *come* for them.

As loving and gracious, as ſweet and endearing, as free and undeſerved, as comfortable and ſeaſonable a Grace and Favour, as that great and good God, who is all Love and Fullneſs, could condeſcend to offer us, or *we*, who ſeem to be even made up of Wants and Miſeries, could reaſonably wiſh or deſire. Which if we can once be brought rightly to underſtand, we may therein learn both our *Duty* and our *Happineſs*; all that God expecteth from us, and all that we are to hope for from *Him*: And which if we can be perſuaded thankfully to embrace, we ſhall in ſo doing acceptably perform what we are obliged to do, be happily freed from all that we ſhould moſt fear to ſuffer, and may henceforward live in a comfortable Expectation of all that *God* hath promiſed,

miſed, and we can reaſonably wiſh hereafter to enjoy, even that bleſſed *End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls.* 1 Pet. i. 9. That *End*, which we have all the Reaſon in the World to long and labour for, and thoſe *Means* which we are obliged to uſe, if we would obtain that End, are both compriſed in this Verſe. Which that we may more clearly diſcern, let us obſerve theſe five Things.

1. *Who they are*, to whom this Invitation is given: And we ſhall find them to be all ſuch as are *laden, that is*, all Sinners.

2. *Who it is*, unto whom all theſe *laden* Perſons, or Sinners, are invited. *Unto Me, that is*, unto him who here inviteth them, even *CHRIST JESUS*, the Saviour of Sinners.

3. *What the Duty is*, which he calleth upon them to do, that they may reap the Benefit of his Invitation. *To come unto* him, *that is*, to *believe* in him.

4. *What are the Qualifications*, which may fit them for coming. They muſt *labour, and be heavy laden: That is*, they muſt feel the Weight of their Sins, and be weary of them.

5. *What that is*, to the Enjoyment whereof they are invited. *CHRIST*

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5. *What that is*, to the Enjoyment whereof they are invited. *CHRIST*

will give them Reſt, that is, he will freely beſtow upon them all Happineſs.

We are then ſo to underſtand theſe few Words, as if *Chriſt* had expreſſed himſelf more largely to us, to this Purpoſe.

You to whom I now ſpeak, yea, and all others as well as you, how well ſoever you may think of yourſelves, muſt know, that you are Sinners; and that to be a Sinner is not ſo light a Matter as many among you take it to be. Sin is like a heavy Load, which, whether he that carrieth it be at preſent ſenſible of it or no, will certainly make him feel it to his Sorrow in the End, if he be not happily eaſed of it in due Time. As you are not able to bear it but to your own Deſtruction; ſo neither are you able of yourſelves to throw it off. I now therefore freely offer you a very ſeaſonable Mercy, and be not ſo much your own Enemies as to refuſe it. I am come into the World on Purpoſe to be your Saviour, and to eaſe you of that deadly Load. Lo, I now proclaim to you, and to all the World, this my gracious Deſign, and my Readineſs to do that for you which you cannot do for yourſelves, which all the Angels in Heaven are not able to do for you, nor any other either in Heaven or Earth

Earth but only I, who am ordained of the *Father* to be the *Saviour* of Sinners. Come ye therefore unto me at my Call; yea, every one that will, let him come; there ſhall be nothing wanting on my Part to do you Good. If you account your Sins a *Burden* to you, if they begin to ſeem heavy and uneaſy to you, if you labour under them, and grow weary of them, and have a Deſire to be freed from them, you will not delay, but come, now you know of one that is both able and willing to eaſe you of your Load. I now give you timely Notice both of the Danger you are in, and of the only Way to Safety: Take heed therefore to yourſelves, and beware how you either preſume to go on yet ſecurely, as though you were in no Danger at all of periſhing, or how you ſit down under your Burden, deſpairing of Eaſe, or how you ſeek out any other Way for that Eaſe which you find wanting. But truſt to me only, and take that Courſe which I direct you to. Let nothing hinder or diſcourage you from coming as readily unto me, as you are invited freely. Fear not the Greatneſs or the Number of your Sins, whereof you are or have been guilty; doubt not of my Ability or Willingneſs to deliver

you from them all. Be but truly humbled under the Senſe of them, and heartily deſirous to be eaſed of them, and ſincerely willing to be ruled by me, and firmly believe I will be full as good as my Word, and you ſhall be ſure of all you come for. The Father hath *put all Things into my Hand*, John iii. 35. And to whomſoever I will, I give Pardon and Peace, Grace and Glory, and everlaſting Reſt in Heaven.

PART I.

THIS being the plain Senſe and Meaning of the Words, let us now learn from them, *firſt*, what we can for the Information of our Underſtandings, whether in Matter of Faith or Practice; and *ſecondly*, be perſwaded by the Arguments in them to accept of that Love and Mercy which are ſo freely offered unto us.

1. For the Information of our Underſtanding, in Matter both of Faith and Practice, we ſhall lay down theſe ſeven Propoſitions.

1. *We ought ſo to account of Sin, as of an heavy Load or grievous Burden.*

2. *We are all of us, none excepted, laden with this heavy Burden of Sin.*

3. *JESUS CHRIST, and he alone, can eaſe us of this Load of Sin.*

4. *All Sinners are freely invited by CHRIST, to come unto him for Eaſe.*

5. *No Man ſhall have Eaſe by Chriſt, but only he that cometh to him.*

6. *He that cometh unto Chriſt, muſt be ſenſible of the Weight of Sin, and deſirous to be eaſed of it.*

7. *All they that come unto Chriſt with an unfeigned Deſire to be eaſed of Sin, ſhall have Reſt.*

All theſe are Things which very nearly concerneth us all clearly to underſtand, and very ſeriouſly to conſider, as we are Sinners, and hope for Mercy at *God*'s Hands. If we do not well underſtand the Nature of *Sin*, and the Evil that is in it, we ſhall never be brought to a due Hatred of it, and ſo muſt needs fail in the great and neceſſary Duty of *Repentance*. If we do not know ourſelves to be *Sinners*, though we ſhould conceive ſome Kind of Hatred of Sin, yet can we not repent, whilſt we think not ourſelves guilty, nor be brought to that Degree of Humility, which muſt prepare us for Mercy; nor be ſo apprehenſive of our Danger, as to be deſirous of a *Saviour*. If we know not *Jeſus* to be our only *Saviour*, though we know both ourſelves to be Sinners, and our Sins to be eternal Death, yet is our Caſe but like that of a Man who is ſick of a mortal Diſeaſe, and knoweth not a Phyſician that can cure him; either

he

he deſpaireth of Life, or he hopeth, without Cauſe, that he may recover and live, or he truſts his Life to a Phyſician that can do him no Good; and which ſoever he doth, all comes to one Thing, he *dies:* So is it with him that knoweth not *CHRIST* to be the only Phyſician of his Soul. If we think that *Chriſt*'s Invitation is not univerſal to all Sinners, but that ſome are excepted, whom he doth not invite to come unto him for Mercy, we ſhall be apt to trouble ourſelves with vain Fears and Doubts, that we are of the Number of thoſe that are excepted; and the more humble we are made by a Senſe of our own Vileneſs, the more will ſuch Fears and Doubts grow upon us; and the fitter we are for Mercy, the more diſconſolate will our Condition be, and our very Religion will be our Burden, and we ſhall not be able to praiſe God, nor to ſerve him with any Chearfulneſs of Heart. If we ſhould ſuppoſe that *Chriſt* would ſave any that do not come unto him, or ſhould miſtake this Coming to *Chriſt*, and think it to be another Thing than really it is; we ſhould, by a vain Preſumption, deſtroy ourſelves, and imagining falſly that we are already ſafe enough, ſhould no longer

be ſolicitous about the Means of Safety, but ſecurely run upon our own Ruin. And he that can perſwade himſelf that either he is come to *Chriſt*, or that *Chriſt* will give him Reſt, whilſt he is not ſenſible of the Burden of Sin, neither deſirous in good Earneſt to be freed from Sin, as a moſt loathſome Thing, doth but miſerably deceive himſelf into vain Hopes of a Pardon, without due Humiliation. *Laſtly*, If we do not well underſtand the Nature of that Reſt which *Chriſt* promiſeth, and after what Manner he giveth it to thoſe that come unto him, what kind of Reſt he giveth in this Life, and what in the Life to come; we ſhall not ſeek it or value it ſo as it deſerveth, neither ſhall we be duly ſenſible of, or thankful for ſo much of it as now he giveth, nor take that Pains as is requiſite, to be fitted for that which is yet behind. Theſe Things therefore being ſo neceſſary to be well underſtood, both for our preſent Comfort, and future Happineſs, let us in good Earneſt apply ourſelves to the learning of them.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.

THE *firſt* Thing we are to learn, is *to account of Sin, as of an heavy Load, or grievous Burden.* And this we may learn from the *Word* of *God*, wherein we find Sin ſo called: As *Gal.* vi. 5. it is ſaid, *Every Man ſhall bear his own Burden*, or the Weight of his own Sin. And St. *Paul*, ſpeaking of ſome ſilly Women that became a Prey to Seducers, 2 *Tim.* iii. 6. he calls them *Women laden with Sins.* In like Manner, the Prophet *Iſaiah*, complaining of rebellious *Judah*, *Iſa.* i. 4. thus expreſſeth himſelf—*Ah ſinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity.* Hence *David*, being ſenſible of his Sins, thus crieth out of the Weight of them, *Pſal.* xxxviii. 3, 4. *There is no Reſt in my Bones, becauſe of my Sin. For mine Iniquities are gone over my Head; as an heavy Burden, they are too heavy for me.*

It would be but a vain Curioſity, to enquire how the Compariſon betwixt *Sin* and

and a *Load* or *Burthen* would hold in all Particulars. The *Holy Ghoſt* maketh Uſe of ſuch Similitudes only to make us underſtand the Evil of Sin in ſome Reſpects, and not in every Thing that belongs unto it. A Burden loadeth a Man, and lieth heavy upon him; it is uneaſy and troubleſome, and the Weight of it may be ſuch, as not only to hinder his Motion, and make it hard and painful to him to move under it, but alſo to lame him, and preſs him to Death. Such a Thing will Sin be found when we have rightly conſidered it. We ſhall conſider it at preſent with a threefold Reſpect: *Firſt*, to *God*, againſt whom it is: *Secondly*, to the World: And *laſtly*, to us Men, whoſe it is. And whether we regard Sin as it is a Diſeaſe and Pollution, or as it is a Tranſgreſſion and a Guilt, it will be found a Burden and a Grievance.

§. II. 1. In conſidering the Nature of Sin, we muſt needs have an Eye to *God* in the firſt Place, all Sin being a Diſagreeableneſs of our Perſons or Actions to the Will of God. Now though Sin cannot properly be a Burden to *God*, who cannot ſuffer any Thing, or

or feel any Evil to himſelf by it, we can neither profit nor hurt *God* by any Thing we do: Yet *God*, to expreſs his Diſlike of it, is pleaſed to uſe ſuch Phraſes of Speech as we do when we complain of what is burdenſome to us. Thus ſaith *God*, Amos ii. 13. *Behold I am preſſed under you, as a Cart is preſſed that is full of Sheaves.* So *Mal.* ii. 17. *Ye have wearied me with your Words.* And Iſa. xliii. 24. *Thou haſt made me to ſerve with thy Sins, thou haſt wearied me with thine Iniquities. Firſt*, as Sin is *Uncleanneſs*, and *Pollution*, and a filthy *Diſeaſe*, how odious muſt it needs be to *God!* It is contrary to the abſolute Goodneſs and Purity of his Nature: *He is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot look upon Iniquity* Habak. i. 13. It is a corrupting what *God* had made ſound, a poiſoning what he had made wholſome, a deforming what he had made beautiful, a depraving what he had made very good; it is a blotting of the holy *Image* of God; it is a debaſing of his Creatures to the Service and Drudgery of the *Devil* and *Luſt*. How ſhould *God* endure to ſee his Works thus abuſed, and the Beauty and Goodneſs of his Creatures thus marred, wherein he would

would be ſeen, loved, praiſed, and glorified? How ſhould *God* endure to find that gracious Deſign of his, of communicating ſtill more and more of his Goodneſs to his Creatures, thus obſtructed? Sin, upon this Account, muſt needs be very odious to him, and a Burden or Grievance. *Secondly*, as it is a Tranſgreſſion of his Law, what can be more abominable? It is a robbing *God* of that which is his own, and a beſtowing it upon his Enemy; it is a diſowning or ſlighting of his ſovereign Power and Authority, and refuſing Obedience to his Command; it is a preferring ourſelves and other Creatures above *God*, in our Affections and Service; it is a ſetting up our very Luſts in *God*'s ſtead, and ſerving them with *his* Creatures: Muſt not all this be a Burden and Grievance to *him?* How ſhall he endure to have his Laws trampled on, his Authority and Government deſpiſed, our Luſts idolized, and worſhipped more than he? And *laſtly*, as Sin maketh us deſerve Puniſhment, and calleth for Juſtice to be done, in the Execution of Vengeance; even ſo it is a Burden to *God*, whoſe Delight is in Loving-kindneſs and Mercy. *He doth*

doth not afflict willingly, neither grieve the Children of Men. Lam. iii. 33. Judgment is *his Work*; but it is his *ſtrange Work.* Iſa. xxviii. 21. A Work it is which he is provoked to, before he will go about it: Therefore is Sin called a Provocation, and by it Men are ſaid to *provoke* or urge God. *'Tis a People*, ſaith God, *that provoketh me to Anger continually to my Face.* Iſa. lxv. 3. *This City hath been to me as a Provocation of mine Anger, and of my Fury.* Jer. xxxii. 31. Sin will not let God alone, nor be at Reſt in his Love and Goodneſs to Men; 'tis an urging him continually to repent of his Kindneſs, and of doing them Good. *If it do Evil in my Sight, that it obey not my Voice, then I will repent of the Good wherewith I ſaid I would benefit them.* Jer. xviii. 10. Yea, for the Sins of Men it is ſaid, that *It repented the Lord that he had made Man on the Earth; and it grieved him at the Heart.* Gen. vi. 6. So that Sin calling for Vengeance, is a Kind of Violence offered to the gracious Nature of God; it is a tiring out of his Patience, that whereas *God*, to declare his merciful Nature, is often ſaid, *Exod.* xxxii. 14, &c. *to repent him of Evil*, which Mens Sins had provoked

voked him to inflict upon them for Correction, ſin at laſt conſtraineth him, in a Manner to Vengeance. *I will ſtretch out my Hand againſt thee, and deſtroy thee: I am weary of repenting.* Jer. xv. 6. So that Sin even pulleth forth the Hand of *God* out of his Boſom, and armeth it againſt the Sinner; it ladeth *God*, as it were, unwilling to it, with the *Weapons of his Indignation.* Iſa. xiii. 5. and maketh him riſe up in *Fury*, Ezek. viii. 18. ſaying, *Ah, I will eaſe me of mine Adverſaries, and avenge me of mine Enemies.* Iſa. i. 24. Such a Burden is our Sin to *God*, that he ſeemeth to have no Eaſe becauſe of it. And thus doth *God* ſhew his Hatred of Sin, as of a Thing that is burdenſome and grievous to him; ſpeaking of it after the Manner of Men, as we uſe to do of that which loadeth, oppreſſeth, tireth, wearieth us, ſo that we are no longer able to bear it.

But if we would ſee how heavy and grievous a Load Sin is, and how odious it is to *God*; let us look upon *JESUS*, the Redeemer of Sinners, the eternal, the only begotten, the beſt beloved *Son* of the *Father*, in whom alone he is well pleaſed. How odious is Sin unto *God*, when he would condeſcend, that the Son

of

of his Love, the *Brightneſs of his Glory, the expreſs Image of his Perſon*, Heb. i. ſhould, for the *Purging of our Sins, make himſelf of no Reputation, take upon him the Form of a Servant, be made in the Likeneſs of Man, humble himſelf, and become obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Croſs?* Phil. ii. What was this, that could ſo depreſs and humble the glorious *Son* of *God?* What but Sin? Not his own; he was the *Lamb of God*, without all *Spot* or *Blemiſh*, 1 Pet. 1. 19. John i. 29. which *came to take away the Sins of the World:* It was our Sin; *The LORD hath laid on him the Iniquity of us all.* Iſa. liii. 6. This was the heavy Load which lay upon him, wherewith *he was oppreſſed and afflicted.* ver. 7. *He his ownſelf bare our Sins in his own Body on the Tree.* 1 Pet. ii. 24. *He hath borne our Griefs, and carried our Sorrows.* Iſa. liii. 4. *He was bruiſed for our Iniquities, the Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him.* ver. 5. This was that heavy Load, the very foregoing Senſe whereof put him into a bitter *Agony*, and forced from his Body *Sweat, as it were great Drops of Blood, falling down to the Ground.* Luke xxii. 44. And *his Soul was exceeding ſorrowful, and very heavy, even unto Death.* Matt. xxvi. 37, 38.

Here

Here ſee and admire the Weight of Sin, which preſſed to Death the Lord of Life: It is by this, that Men are ſaid to *grieve the Holy Spirit of God, whereby we are ſealed, unto the Day of Redemption.* Epheſ. iv. 30.

§. III. 2. Let us look abroad into the World, and whatſoever we behold therein, as it ſhould be a Monitor to us, to love and honour the great, wiſe, and good *Creator* of Heaven and Earth, and all Things therein, ſo may it alſo teach us, how heavy a Burden to the World Sin is. The Apoſtle, *Rom.* viii. 20, 21, 22, ſpeaketh of the *Creature, as made ſubject to Vanity*, and in *the Bondage of Corrpution*; and ſaith, *the whole Creation groaneth, and travaileth in Pain together, until now*; as longing and labouring to be delivered from that Vanity and Bondage. Though ſome, by the Words [*Creature*] and [*Creation,*] underſtand the Heathen or Gentile World, and by [*Vanity*] and [*Bondage,*] Idolatry, and the Sins accompanying it; and ſo depart from the common Interpretation of this Scripture; yet (not to diſpute which was St. *Paul*'s Meaning in this Place) it is certainly a ſad Truth, which moſt

Interpreters

Interpreters deliver as his Senſe, that the whole World of Creatures is, by Sin, ſubjected to much Vanity, and brought into the Bondage of Corruption. The *Curſe* laid upon the *Ground* for Man's Sake, *Gen.* iii. 17. lieth very heavy upon it, and we, to our Sorrow, ſee and feel it daily. The beauteous Face of the Earth is become disfigured with *Thorns and Thiſtles*, with many cumberſome and noiſome Weeds: Very much both of the Pleaſantneſs, and the Vertue of the Creatures, is loſt as to us; and with many venomous, poiſonous, and noxious Qualities, hath our Sin filled many of them. Many of them made for our Help and Uſe, and therefore ſubject unto Man, are now become rebellious, and a Terror to us, very untractable, and hardly to be tamed by us; and thoſe that are tamed, we muſt ſerve them, before they will ſerve us. But the greateſt of all *Vanities* which the *Creatures* are now ſubject to, is our Abuſe of them, to the Diſhonour of the *Creator:* Whilſt we make them the Inſtruments of Sin and Food for our Luſts, they are made by the Devil his Baits to tempt us with, and we make them Weapons, to war againſt *God* and our own Souls. They are exceedingly diſhonoured

by

by our loving them too well, and more than we do *God*; and they therefore are unſatisfactory to us, becauſe we covet them above Meaſure. Well may the Sun be weary of giving us Light to *riot in the Day-time*, and the Moon grudge to give us Light to commit the *Works of Darkneſs*; and the glorious Face of Heaven may well veil itſelf in Clouds, as aſhamed of our open Impieties. What Waſteneſs and Deſolation hath Sin made in many Parts of the Earth, by Floods, and Earthquakes, and Fires from Heaven, by the peſtilential Contagion of the Air, and malignant Influences of the Stars? What Drought and Barrenneſs, what Blaſtings and Mildews, what Rottenneſs, Stench, and Putrefaction, doth it daily groan under? How is it ſhaken with Wars and Tumults, Confuſions, and Diſorders of all Sorts! How is it! polluted, and made drunk with the Blood of the Slain, and made to ſurfeit upon the rotten Carcaſſes, wherewith it is laden by Famine, Sword, and Peſtilence! So that we may borrow the Prophet's Words, *Iſa.* xxiv. 19. to expreſs its Sufferings.—*The Earth is utterly broken down; the Earth is clean diſſolved; the Earth is moved exceedingly; the Earth reels*

reels to and fro, like a Drunkard, and is removed like a Cottage, and the Tranſgreſſion thereof is heavy upon it. All this is the Fruit of Sin; and all this layeth the heavier Load upon us Men.

§. IV. 3. Let us therefore conſider *ourſelves*, whoſe the Sin is; and if we have not quite loſt all Senſe and Feeling, we ſhall ſoon perceive the Intolerableneſs of this heavy Burden: 1. As it hath ſunk us below our primitive Dignity. 2. As it hath laid us under God's Diſpleaſure and Curſe. And, 3. As it hath made every Thing a Burden to us, and us a Burden to every Thing.

1. Sin is a *Burden* to us, in that *it hath very much ſunk us below ourſelves*, and hath made us moſt vile and contemptible Things, in Compariſon of what we were made at firſt by *God*. It hath mightily debaſed our Nature, and ſpoiled us of our primitive Honour and Dignity, and hath thruſt us down into a Condition too much like unto that of brute Animals. *Man being in Honour, abideth not; but is become like the Beaſts that periſh.* Pſal. xlix. 12. It hath almoſt quite ſmothered, and put out that Light of Reaſon, which *God* had ſet

ſet up in the Soul of Man, to be the Guide of our Actions, and which is the great Difference betwixt us and Beaſts. This ſhould diſcover unto us *God* and *ourſelves*; *God*'s Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs in every Thing, and our Happineſs in *God*; but Sin hath ſo clouded this *Light* within us, that we neither know nor conſider Things as we ought to do. *The Ox*, ſaith God, *knoweth his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſter's Crib; but Iſrael doth not know, my People do not conſider.* Iſa. i. 3. Sin hath ſo corrupted and perverted the *Will* in Man, that whatever Men are brought to know of *God* and themſelves, they are not willing to regard either as they ought; nay, they are apt to ſay to *God*, with thoſe, Jer. ii. 31. *We are Lords; we will come no more unto thee.* We are all bowed too much into ourſelves, and are reſolved to pleaſe ourſelves, and to have our own *Wills*, whatſoever the *Will* of *God* is, or how plainly ſoever it be revealed unto us; we will do what we will do, though we be ſure to die for it. *Why will ye die, O Houſe of Iſrael?* Ezek. xviii. 31. Sin hath ſo depraved, diſordered, and depreſſed our Affections, downward towards the Earth, that they are ſet upon almoſt nothing

nothing elſe but thoſe very *Things on the Earth*, which we are forbidden to ſet them upon. *Col.* iii. 2. We cannot raiſe them up to *the Things above*, as we are there commanded. We are naturally without Life, and Senſe, and Motion, as to heavenly Things; but Mens *God is their Belly, and their Glory is in their Shame, and they mind* (yea even dote upon) *earthly Things*, as it is, *Phil.* iii. 19. So that every one of us may, with Heavineſs of Heart, ſay unto *God*, with the Pſalmiſt, *I was even as a Beaſt before thee.* Pſalm lxxiii. 22.

2. Sin is a very heavy *Burden* to us, as it hath *laid us under the heavy Diſpleaſure and Curſe of God*, and draweth down his heavy Hand upon us, in many grievous Afflictions, and fearful Judgments. When *David* was chaſtiſed for his Sins, he thus cried out unto God, *Day and Night thy Hand is heavy upon me.* Pſal. xxxii. 4. *The Burden of the Lord's Anger is heavy.* Iſa. xxx. 27. How many hard Labours, Pains, and Sickneſſes, are we made to ſuffer in our Bodies? What Griefs, Troubles Vexations, and Uneaſineſſes endure we in our Minds? What vain Contrivances are we daily perplexed with, and what unexpected

pected Diſappointments do we meet with in our Deſigns and Endeavours? Great Loſſes in our Poſſeſſions, Croſſes, Straits, and Difficulties, in all our Ways attends us, and numberleſs Evils of all Sorts, are come upon us, becauſe of our Sins. So that we may every one of us ſay unto *God*, with *Job*, Chap. vii. *v.* 20 *I have ſinned: What ſhall I do unto thee, O thou Preſerver of Men? Why haſt thou ſet me as a Mark againſt thee, ſo that I am become a Burden to myſelf? Finally*, ſuch is this *Load* of Sin, that if we go on under it unto the End, it will certainly ſink us under the heavy Wrath of *God*, into the nethermoſt *Hell*. In the mean Time, if we be but ſo much awake as to feel our Sins, and the Evils of them, what a Load muſt there needs lie upon our Hearts and Spirits, from that *fearful looking for of Judgment, and fiery Indignation, which ſhall devour the Adverſaries?* Heb. x. 27.

3. Sin is a grievous Burden in this Conſideration, *That it rendereth us a Burden unto every Thing, and every Thing a Burden unto us.* The whole Creation, as we have ſeen, doth as it were groan, and tremble, and reel under us, as unable to bear us. The holy Angels in Heaven,

amongſt

amongſt whom there *is Joy over one Sinner that repenteth*, Luk. xv. 7. muſt needs be grieved to ſee our Sins. The Hearts and Spirits of all good Men are grieved to behold *God* diſhonoured, and their Brethren's Souls in Danger by Sin. Every good *Lot, in ſeeing and hearing, vexeth his righteous Soul from Day to Day, with the filthy Converſation of the Wicked, and their unlawful Deeds.* 2 Pet. ii. 7. 8. *Horrour*, ſaith *David, hath taken hold upon me, becauſe of the Wicked, that forſake thy Law.* Pſal. cix. 53. And again, *v.* 136. *Rivers of Waters run down mine Eyes, becauſe they keep not thy Law.* The Miniſters of Chriſt, ſuch as St. *Paul, are in Travail, till Chriſt be formed in* their Flocks. *Gal.* iv. 19. And like him, they have *great Heavineſs, and continual Sorrow in their Hearts*, Rom. ix. 2. for Men's Sins, and the Miſeries which are like to come upon them for the ſame. Yea, Sin maketh even the beſt Things that we do, though they be ſuch Things as God himſelf hath commanded, a Burden to God. *To what Purpoſe*, ſaith he, *is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me? When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your Hand, to tread my Courts? Incenſe is an Abomination to*

me, the New-moons and Sabbaths, the Calling of Aſſemblies I cannot away with, it is Iniquity, even the ſolemn Meeting. Your New-moons and your appointed Feaſts my Soul hateth: They are a Trouble to me, I am weary to bear them. Iſa. i. 11, *&c. The very Prayers of the Wicked are an Abomination to him.* Prov. xxix. 9. Thus are we by Sin become a Burden both to Heaven and Earth.

And Sin hath made even every Thing, but eſpecially the beſt Things, a Burden to us. *All is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit.* Eccl. i. 14. There is nothing that bringeth not ſome Kind of Trouble with it. No Eſtate or Condition is eaſy to us, or fully pleaſeth us, ſomething there is always in it that diſcontenteth and grieveth us; we neither know how to want nor how to abound: What we have we dare not enjoy, for Fear of wanting; or cannot enjoy, for the tormenting Thoughts of what we want: And what we want we dare not ſeek for, leſt the obtaining thereof ſhould coſt us what we have. We are like them that have great Appetities and weak Digeſtions, we are at no Eaſe whilſt we faſt, for the continual craving of our Appetites; and we are as ill at Eaſe when we have eaten, for the

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Oppreſſion upon our Stomachs. The very Care of keeping, or Fear of loſing, or Deſire of getting what we love; and the Grief of enduring, or Fear of incurring, or longing to be rid of what we hate, is our continual Torment. So that both Riches and Poverty, Honour and Diſgrace, Health and Sickneſs, yea, our very Time and Life, are Burdens to us. *All Things are full of Labour.* Eccleſ. i. 8. *In much Wiſdom is much Grief, and he that encreaſeth Knowledge encreaſeth Sorrow.* ver. 18. But above all, as we are Sinners, thoſe Things are moſt our Trouble which either are the Means of Comfort, or ſhould be our greateſt Delight. *Repentance* is a bitter Pill tothe ſick Soul, and *Mortification* of the Fleſh is worſe than the Surgeon's ſlaſhing and burning; and *ſelf-denial* is as bad as Self-murder to us. In a Word all, the Service and Worſhip of God, which ſhould be our moſt delightful Exerciſe, and thegreateſt Refreſhment to our Souls, *what a Wearineſs is it?* Mal. i. 13. yea, even our good and gracious *God*, the infinite *Good*, in whom alone we ſhould glory, and in whom alone we can be happy, is the moſt uneaſy Burden of all. *Thou*

haſt been weary of me, O Iſrael. Iſa. xliii. 22.

Surely no more can be needful to ſhew us how grievous a Load Sin is, and ſhould be accounted by us. O that Men, *Men* that would be thought wiſe, and able to diſcern between Good and Evil, yea, and *they* of all other Men, who take it as an Affront to be accounted ignorant of any Thing, though it be that perhaps which a truly wiſe Man thinks leaſt worth the knowing, would be perſwaded to ſee and conſider this, that ſo they might be brought at leaſt out of Love with, if not to a perfect Hatred of that, which doth at preſent ſo debaſe, and will, in the End, utterly ruin them. Men could not go on ſo merrily, or at leaſt ſo uncorcernedly, in a Courſe of ſinning, if they would conſider what a filthy and deadly Load, they carry. The Reaſon of all that moſt unreaſonable Confidence, and groundleſs Security, which we ſee in Sinners, is either, that they apprehend not the Evil of Sin, how heavy and grievous a Thing it is, or elſe, that they do not think or conſider that they themſelves are Sinners, and have this ſad Load upon them. The *former*, the Evil of Sin, hath been in ſome

little

little Meaſure ſhewn in what hath been ſaid. The *latter*, that we are Sinners, comes now to be ſhewn in what followeth.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I.

WE are all of us, none excepted, laden with this heavy Burden of Sin. Whatever the Devil hath perſuaded any Man to think of himſelf, this is a Truth which *God* hath taught us in his Word, that we are all Sinners. Sin is a Load which we bring into the World with us, and which, as long as we live upon Earth, we conſtantly carry about with us: And the longer we live, the more we daily add unto it, if we do not come, as here we are invited, unto *Chriſt*, to be eaſed of it.

That we may underſtand this more fully, and be thoroughly convinced of it, as it very nearly concerneth us to be, it will not be admiſs to enquire how we came by this Load. For ſure it is, that *Sin* is none of *God*'s Crea-

tures, whence ſoever it came, it came not from *God:* All that he made *was very good.* Gen. i. 31. Every Thing in its Kind had a Meaſure of Goodneſs communicated unto it by *God*, but *Man* a greater Share thereof than any other Creature under Heaven. *God make Man upright.* Eccleſ. vi. 29. *In the Image of God created he him.* Gen. i. 27. Then had Man no Load of Corruption on his Soul to depreſs it, no Burden of Guilt on his Conſcience to gall it, no heavy Curſe from *God* to ſink him, no Grief, Sorrow, or Vexation in his Mind, no Sickneſs, Pain or Wearineſs in his Body, no Trouble, Annoyance, or Moleſtation from any of the Creatures about him: But every Thing above him, about him, or within him, was light and eaſy to him; and his Duty, as well as his Condition, was his Pleaſure and Delight. It is not poſſible for us, in our State of Corruption, to conceive the Lightſomeneſs and the unmixed Delights of *Adam*'s pure Soul, how pleaſant and raviſhing unto it was the Sight and Contemplation of his *God*, the immenſe Fountain of Being and Goodneſs? How ſweet and obliging the Con-

Conſideration of himſelf, his own noble Frame, and Compoſure, and Induements? Of all the Creatures, and that Variety of Goodneſs communicated to them for his Uſe and Comfort, how natural was it to him to love, praiſe and ſerve *him* who had made him to be the Lord, next to *himſelf*, of all Things here below, the compleat Maſter and Commander of himſelf, and the Candidate of everlaſting Glory? Hitherto there could be no Burden, becauſe there was no Sin.

But now, when Man, unmindful of his *God* and *himſelf*, of the Duty and Dignity to which he was created, bowed his Ear to hearken to his Wife, the weaker Veſſel, and that, after ſhe had ſtooped ſo low as to converſe with the *Serpent*; when he caſt down his Eeys from *God* above to the Creature below, he became like the Beaſts that periſh, fit for Burden; and ſuch a Load did the ſubtile *Serpent* lay upon him, as he was neither able to bear, nor to caſt off again. He was tempted to diſobey his Maker's Command, in eating of the Fruit, which, upon Pain of Death, he was charged not to eat; and hereby he eat Poiſon to his Nature, which, by a malignant Operation, corrupted all

his noble Faculties. Henceforward he became a Burden to the World, and the World was made a Burden to him. The *Ground*, out of which he was taken, was *accurſed* for his Sake, and brought a troubleſome Burden of *Thorns and Thiſtles*, to vex and weary him. *Gen.* iii. 17. His Life became a Burden to him, for it could now no otherwiſe be preſerved than by *eating his Bread* in *Sorrow*, and *in the Sweat of his Face*, ver. 17, 19. He became a Burden to himſelf, he was aſhamed of his own *Nakedneſs*, and ſought for a Covering of *Fig-Leaves*, ver. vii. And *God* himſelf became a Burden to him, in whom alone he could hope for Life and Happineſs; he was afraid of his *Voice*, and ran *among the Trees of the Garden, to hide himſelf from the Preſence of the Lord God*, ver. viii. Laſtly, by diſobeying the *God* of his Life, which was his Sin, he brought on himſelf ſuch a Load as ſunk him down in Death into *the Duſt, whence he was taken*, ver. xix. And, had not the wonderful Mercy of God come into his Relief, had ſunk him irrecoverably into the loweſt Hell, which he had deſerved.

§. II.

§ II. We here ſee how the firſt Load came upon the firſt Man and Woman, *Adam* and *Eve*, our firſt Parents, and this *Load* was *Sin*, with the ſad Attendants of it. Neither was this Load buried with them in their Graves, but is intailed upon *us*, their *Children*, to all Generations, as the miſerable Legacy their dying Innocence bequeathed us; and there is not one of us all but he hath a deep Share in it. Which that we may the better underſtand, we are to know, That *God* did not deal with *Adam* as with a ſingle Perſon only, but as he was the *firſt Man* whom he had made to people and repleniſh the World, as the *Father* and *Head* of the whole Plantation and Race of Mankind, and ſo tranſacted with him for himſelf and all his Poſterity. The Eſtate and Privileges which he had ſettled upon him at his Creation, was not as an Eſtate for Life, and perſonal only; but it was to have and hold to him, and his, for all future Generations; upon this Condition only, that *perfect* Obedience ſhould be given to the Will of his *Maker*, and that, upon default of ſuch Obedience, all ſhould become forfeited and void. That this was the Condition of his Tenure is abundantly

clear from the Penalty annexed, *That in the Day he eat thereof, or ſinned, he ſhould ſurely die.* Gen. ii. 17.

Now we are certainly told, that *Adam* diſobeyed his *Maker*'s Command, brake the Law which was the Condition of the Eſtate, and thereby forfeited all Right and Title to whatever he held, and became obnoxious to the Penalty of Death. And what was thus forfeited by the *Father*, his *Children* can lay no juſt Claim unto: But that very Eſtate, whatſoever it was, unto which his Offence had reduced him, muſt needs be all that any of his Children are born unto. If *Adam* had any Thing which was ſo his own that he held it not of *God*, it might be ſuppoſed to deſcend unto us. But if all he had, and he himſelf, was God's, it is manifeſt he could not hold it any longer, nor upon any other Terms, than it pleaſed *God*; nor could any Thing of it deſcend upon his Children, but only ſo far, and on ſuch Terms as *God* ſhould chuſe. If *Adam* made a Forfeiture of all, and did incur the Penalty threatned, it was an undeſerved Mercy, if the Penalty was not inflicted to the utmoſt, if any Thing of it was abated; and if any Thing of what he enjoyed was left to him or his, it muſt needs

needs be a free *Gift* of *God*. Thus the Caſe ſtands. Our *Father Adam* was *God*'s Creature, and whatſoever he had in him, or without him, was the *free Gift* of *God*; and no Right or Hopes he could have, either of continuing what he was, or enjoying what he did, or receiving any Addition to his Happineſs, but meerly by the free Bounty of *God*. *God* commanded *Adam* to do his Will, and live in perfect Obedience unto him, and threatned him, that if he did not ſo, he ſhould die; plainly enough intimating, that all he had was held by him, only on Condition of Obedience, even as far as Life itſelf. *Adam*, by Diſobedience, forfeited all, and deſerved to die. *God* did not, as he had deſerved, immediately deprive him of Life; *God* did not, as he might have done, take from him the natural Powers of a Man; *God* did not take from him the Power of Procreation, or begetting Children; but, to make him ſenſible what he had done in ſinning, he left him in a *dying* Condition, and aſſured him he ſhould *die*, though he promiſed a *Saviour*, by whom he might eſcape eternal Death: And he left him his *Nature*, as himſelf by Sin had made it, corrupted; and the *Faculties* thereof weakened

weakened and depraved; yet under a Poſſibility of being reſtored and purified by Grace: And though he begat Children, he can now leave them nothing; but what his Diſobedience had left him, he cannot derive to them any other Nature than he had, full of Corruption and Weakneſſes. *A corrupt Tree bringeth forth corrupt Fruit*, Matt. vii. 17. Though we are born *Men*, with the ſame Kind of Souls and Bodies as *Adam* was made; and though we have the ſame *Faculties* of Soul as he had, to wit, of underſtanding and chuſing, yet are theſe in *us* as Sin had made them in him. *Adam* was made in the Image of *God*, upright and holy, but ſinful *Adam begat Children, after his own Likeneſs*. Gen. v. 3. *ſinful* Children. *Who can bring a clean Thing out of an unclean?* Job xiv. 4. We muſt all confeſs, as the *Pſalmiſt* did, *Pſal.* li. 5. *we are ſhapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did our Mothers conceive us. That which is born of the Fleſh is Fleſh.* John iii. 6. corrupt and ſinful Fleſh, and becauſe of that, mortal alſo. Thus ſaith the *Apoſtle, By one Man's Diſobedience many were made Sinners.* Rom. v. 19. And how many, we are plainly told by him, before, ver. xii. *By one Man Sin*

entered

entered into the World, and Death by Sin; and ſo Death paſſed upon all Men, for that all have ſinned. And by what one Man this was, he telleth us. 1 Cor. xv. 22. *In Adam all* die. Hence it is very plain, that we are all of us, even the Infant that is new born, laden with Sin. We ſee that ſuch Infants die as well as others, and we are ſure that Death came upon all for Sin, and *Death is the Wages of Sin.* Rom. vi. 23. and *paſſeth upon all, for that all have ſinned.* Rom. v. 12. Whoſoever therefore *dieth*, he only excepted who died for our Sins, *Jeſus Chriſt*, is a *Sinner.*

§. III. It is therefore a vain and fooliſh Thing for us, inſtead of humbly believing what *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles* have told us, to ſtand proudly diſputing, how theſe Things can be. It is a great Part of our hereditary Diſeaſe, that we are born with, which makes us unapt to believe our *Phyſician*, when he tells us we are ſick, and offereth to cure us. Should the Man that was born blind, and had his Sight reſtored by *Chriſt*, have ſhewn any Wiſdom, in refuſing ſuch a Bleſſing offered him, till Chriſt had ſatisfied him, in anſwering that Queſtion which the Diſciples

Diſciples aſked concerning him. Joh. x. 2. *Maſter, who did ſin, this Man or his Parents, that he was born blind?* Would we not think thoſe Men mad indeed, who, when they make a very hard ſhift to crawl a-long the Way, under the heavy Loads they carrry upon their Backs, and go groaning and puffing under them, bowed down almoſt to the Earth, ſhall yet refuſe our Help, freely offered them, and that, upon this Account only, that they will not believe they carry any ſuch Weights, unleſs you can give them a perfect Account, how and why they are ſo laden? Even ſo abſurd are many amongſt us, who, though they cannot chuſe but feel this original Corruption of their Nature, yet will not be convinced there is any ſuch Thing, except you can ſatisfy their Curioſity, concerning the Way and Manner how this Corruption is derived from *Adam*, and punctually anſwer all the Queſtions they ſhall pleaſe to aſk you, about the Manner of its Propagation, or the Equity and Reaſonableneſs of its Imputation. It ought in all Reaſon to ſatisfy us, that we have an able and good *Phyſician*, who perfectly underſtandeth the Nature, Cauſe and Progreſs of our Diſtemper,

Diſtemper, and is ready to heal us. Our Buſineſs is to feel we are ſick, to deſire to be well, to believe our Phyſician, heartily to love and thank him for his Kindneſs and Care of us, and joyfully yield to his Preſcriptions and Ordering. If we will not do all this, or are too well conceited of our Health and Soundneſs; we only thereby ſhew, that our Diſeaſe hath prevailed too far upon us, and hath diſordered our Brain, and ſtupified our Senſes, and put us paſt all Poſſibility of Cure, till we come to ourſelves again. Then certainly our own Senſe, and ſad Experience, will bear witneſs to the Truth of what the Scripture telleth us of our natural State and Condition. For,

I. Do we not, to our Sorrow, ſee and feel that to be true which is told us, Job xiv. 1, 2. *Man that is born of a Woman, is of few Days, and full of Trouble. He cometh up like a Flower, and is cut down; he fleeth alſo as a Shadow, and continueth not.* And *Pſal.* ciii. 15. *As for Man, his Days are as Graſs, as a Flower of the Field, ſo he flouriſheth: For the Wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone, and the Place thereof ſhall know it no more.* And *Job* v. 7. *Man is born*

unto

unto Trouble, as the Sparks flie upward. Are we not ſufficiently convinced of our own Mortality, and that we muſt all die, and return to Duſt? And is it not as notable a Sign of our native Corruption, as any that can be given us, that we are ſo little mindful of our dying Condition, and ſo little careful to provide for Death, or ſo much as ſeriouſly to conſider, what ſhall become of us when we die? Are we not convinced, by what we ſee and feel, that this Life is full of Troubles and Vexations? Do we not feel Weakneſs, Sickneſs, Pains, many Languiſhings and Decays in our Bodies; many Perplexities and Diſtractions; many Fears and Anxieties, many Doubts and troubleſome Jealouſies in our Minds; many Loſſes and Diſappointments in our Poſſeſſions and Labours? He that can ſay he is without ſome of theſe, let him caſt the firſt Stone at him, who thus ſlandereth the Life of Man. And can we think it agreeable to the infinite Goodneſs of *God*, to create Man at firſt to all this, and make him with a Deſign to vex him, and delight himſelf in his Vexation? Indeed, they who have improved their original Corruption to that Degree of brutiſh Ferocity and Wildneſs, as to make

make a Recreation of Cruelty, and to delight in tormenting Creatures, may poſſibly in Time come to have ſo little Uſe of their Reaſon, through their long Diſuſe or Abuſe of it, as to think *God* altogether ſuch an one as themſelves. But it will always be moſt abominable to every ſober Man, to think that an infinitely good *God* ſhould give Life unto Man, only that it might be a Torment to him, and that he gave him Reaſon, only to make him more ſenſible of his Miſery, or that he inflicteth any Evil upon Man, but for Sin, which doth deſerve it.

2. Do we not find ourſelves very ignorant and ſhort-ſighted in many Things, which we muſt needs confeſs to be of very great Concernment to us to know, as touching the Affairs of this preſent Life and World? Do we certainly know what is beſt for us, and the beſt and ſureſt Means of obtaining it? Do we know what will prove hurtful to us, with the ready and ſure Way to ſhun or prevent it? If any Man can think that he knoweth all this, the Iſſue will confute him to his Sorrow, and the Fruſtration of his wiſeſt Contrivances, and ſubtileſt Projects for himſelf, will ſhew him how little he underſtood all the Obſtructions which lay

lay in his Way, or thoſe numerous Emergencies which might defeat his Hopes. Yea, we cannot but find our Inclinations very often too ſtrong for our Reaſon, and carrying us by a pleaſing Violence down the Stream, when our Reaſon telleth us we ſhould be more wary. We ſee the Beaſts themſelves, by a ſecret Inſtinct of Nature, carried on to their proper Food, and ſhunning thoſe Things which are hurtful to them. And can we be ſo unreaſonable as to imagine, that the wiſe and good God indued Man with far nobler Faculties than they have, to no better Purpoſe, than with them to contrive his own Ruin or Hurt? Hath he the Faculty of Reaſoning given him, only to reaſon himſelf into Uncertainties and Snares? And hath he a chuſing and reſolving Faculty, only to chuſe what is unreaſonable, or unlikely, or deſtructive? That *Man*, of all other Creatures, ſhould act ſo uncertainly, and go on ſo blindly in dangerous Paths, and either ſee ſo little, or chuſe ſo fooliſhly, in Things relating to his own Preſervation and Comfort, muſt needs proceed from a ſtrange Corruption of his Faculties. And there can hardly be a clearer Argument of this Corrup-

Corruption, than that a Man ſhould think otherwiſe.

3. Do we not perceive our natural Weakneſs, and Blindneſs, and Wearineſs, moſt of all in thoſe Things, which, of all others, do moſt nearly concern us; in Things ſpiritual, belonging to our Souls, and in Things that relate to our everlaſting Peace and eternal Happineſs? Hath *God* given unto Men Souls of a ſpiritual Subſtance, and ſuch as can find no Satisfaction in groſs and earthly Things, but are always thirſting and longing for ſomething more agreeable to their Nature, which muſt be ſomething ſpiritual and heavenly; and ſhall we think, that he either hath not provided for them ſuch Things as may ſatisfy them, or made them at firſt contrary to all other Creatures, uncapable either of diſcerning, or loſing ſuch Things, when diſcovered and recommended to them? That is, ſhall we think that God made ſuch a Creature as Man, to be perpetually tormented with reſtleſs and unſatiable Deſires? It is a Thing moſt evident, that nothing leſs than the chief and everlaſting Good can yield unto Man any perfect Contentment and Satisfaction; whatever he enjoys beſides, he always feels a Want and Emp-

tineſs

tineſs in himſelf, and a craving Deſire of ſomething elſe, though he knows not what it is. All have a longing after Happineſs, and happy they cannot think themſelves, whilſt they find a Scantineſs and Imperfection in every Thing they can here meet with; or whilſt they conſider there is a Poſſibility of loſing what they now enjoy, and a Certainty of dying, and leaving all behind them. We would have enough, and we would have it durable, and we would live for ever, to enjoy it. Nothing leſs than all this will pleaſe us. We cannot be eaſy under the Thoughts of wanting, loſing, or dying. Did God then give Man Knowledge, and yet hide from him the only Good, which it moſt highly concerneth him to know? Did he give him the Affections of Deſire and Love, and yet not to love that chief Good which is the moſt proper Object of Love, and in the Love whereof his Happineſs muſt conſiſt? How elſe cometh it to paſs, that Man doth now ſo hardly attain to any true Knowledge of *God?* And that the beſt of Men, with all the Helps which they now have, reach to ſuch low and imperfect Degrees of it? Why is it, that their Affections are ſo ſlow and dull to *God*-ward, now that he doth

doth diſcover unto them ſo much of his own Goodneſs, both in his Word and Works? Could this be ſo, were not our Faculties exceedingly depraved by Sin? How did the wiſeſt of all the Heathen Sages miſerably blunder and confound themſelves in their Notions of a *God* and Happineſs? And with what ridiculous Fooleries did they ſeek to pacify his Wrath, and keep his Favour? How uneaſy did they find it to drive out of their Thoughts a future State both of Happineſs and Miſery after Death? Yet at what a Loſs were they in thinking what this future State ſhould be? And as for us, who have the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*, and therein the cleareſt Revelation of *God*, and *Heaven*, and the Way to Happineſs, that we muſt expect upon Earth; yet how hardly are we brought to apply ourſelves to the learning of what he would teach us, and what ſlow Progreſs do we make, even the very beſt of us, in *Chriſt*'s School? What ſtrong Inclinations do we very early diſcover to Sin and Vanity, and all thoſe Things which *God* hath forbidden us to love, and the Love whereof will bring us to final Ruin and Deſtruction? With what Reluctancy of Mind, and how much againſt the Grain,

are

are we drawn to ſubmit to the Will of *God*, and the diligent Uſe of the Means of Life? How earneſtly do we purſue, and with how much ado are we reſtrained from the Purſuit of Things vain and unprofitable; and how coldly and feebly at beſt do we beſtir ourſelves about the one Thing neceſſary? How hard a Taſk do we find it to rule ourſelves, and gain ſo much Command over our unruly Affections, as to keep them within any Bounds of Sobriety and Moderation? And whilſt we want Diſcretion to order ourſelves, how hard a Matter is it to perſuade us, with any Patience, to ſubmit ourſelves to the Government of others? By all this, if we be not wilfully blind, we may eaſily diſcern, that Sin hath much diſordered us, that we are brought under its Dominion; and may find it true, that Satan, our Adverſary, hath, by Sin, got much Power over us, even to lead us captive at his Will, having blinded the Eyes of our Underſtandings. So that *the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God; for they are Fooliſhneſs unto him; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.* 1 Cor. ii. 14. *And the carnal Mind is at Enmity againſt*

againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. Rom. viii. 7. It is too evident how contentedly we live in Subjection to the *Law of Sin in our Members.* Rom. vii. 23. And how we drudge *to make Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfill the Luſts thereof.* Rom. xiii. *ult.*

§. IV. This is the ſad Condition of every Man and Woman that is born into the World. And very ſtrange and lamentable it is, that it ſhould be no more conſidered, and laid to Heart by us. Is it not a Wonder, to ſee how contentedly and unconcernedly moſt of us, and how proudly and inſolently many of us, walk under this ſo foul and heavy Load? Certainly moſt Men little think, what Evils of all Sorts Sin hath brought upon them already; and much leſs do they ſeriouſly conſider, whither, if they be not ſeaſonably eaſed of it by *Chriſt*, it will bring them at the laſt; ſeeing they can be ſo well content to bear it ſtill, and take ſo little Care, nay, are ſo very unwilling, for any heavenly Treaſure, to part with it. Such is the far greateſt Part of Mankind: They can eat and drink, and laugh

laugh and ſleep, even as if they had nothing at all in them, or about them, to moleſt or offend them; as if their Peace was perfectly made with God, and they were out of all Danger; as if they had nothing at all to burden their Conſciences, or create them any farther Trouble. However the Caſe is now with ſuch careleſs and ſecure Sinners, it muſt be otherwiſe with them before it can be well. And yet, how much more abſurd are they, and they are not a few, who ſo little think what they are, or what Sin hath made them, whence they came, or whither they muſt go, or what they carry by the Way, that they walk ſo ſtoutly and proudly under their Load, as if they were too good for all the World, and nothing in the World good enough for them, or fine enough to feed their ſwiniſh Luſts. Theſe are they that can think ſo well of themſelves, that there is hardly any Room in them for the leaſt good Thought of any other; who are puffed up, and ſwell to an unreaſonable Greatneſs in their own Eyes, and are elevated above the ordinary Stature of Mankind in the Conceit of their own Worth: Who, upon every Occaſion, yea where there

there is no Occaſion given them, can take Occaſion to boaſt themſelves, and talk vainly of their noble Birth and Parentage, and the Dignity of their Anceſtors, for which they would be thought much better Men than their Neighbours, and take it for an Affront to hear any of their poorer Brethren, or Men of a lower Rank in the World, upon any Account compared with them; as if they were made of ſome finer Kind of Mould, or had Souls of a nobler Original than the common Sort of Men. Alas, alas, not the moſt deſpicable that goes along the Streets, ſcraping up a poor Livelihood, carrieth ſo foul and naſty a Load upon his Back, as theſe do upon their Souls; who would fain appear ſuch gay and glorious Things in the Eyes of Men. Can any Man be proud of being the Child of a Beggar, and a Rebel too? Yet ſuch are we all, till we be born again of the Spirit of God, and made new Creatures; and be ſure of this, that Humility, and not Pride, is the eſſential Quality of the new Man. *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye ſhallnt o enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Matt. xviii. 3. Can a Man be proud of

the Scab and Leproſy of ſtinking Sores and Ulcers? And yet ſuch a filthy and loathſome Thing, in God's Sight, is the fineſt Lord or Lady in the World, how gorgeouſly or richly ſoever covered or painted over, to blind the Eyes of Men, till Chriſt hath healed them. Can any one be proud of his Captivity, and of the vileſt Sort of Slavery and Drudgery? Yet ſuch a wretched Captive, Slave and Drudge, is the ſtatelieſt He or She that liveth, though they be too apt to look upon all others as their Vaſſals, and born to ſerve their Luſts, till theis be ranſomed, and ſet at Liberty, by Chriſt, the Redeemer of Sinners. Would Men, in deriving their Pedigrees, aſcend, as we all may, as high as *Adam*, they could not chuſe, but by beholding the Duſt whence they were taken, to learn Humility, and by conſidering the Load he bequeathed them, learn to delight leſs in their Drudgery. *Adam* ſold not himſelf alone, but all his Offspring, for one Taſte of the forbidden Fruit; ſo that we may all cry out in the Apoſtle's Words, *Rom.* vii. 14. *We are ſold under Sin.* Yea ſold we were, before we were born, and come into the World in Bondage and Thraldom, there to drudge for our Enemy,

Enemy, that ſeeks the Deſtruction of our Souls; to ſweat, and toil, and ſigh, and groan out miſerable Days in the Bitterneſs of our Spirits, ſaying, *O wretched Men that we are, who ſhall deliver us from the Body of this Death.* Rom. vii. 24. And thus muſt we continue for ever enſlaved, if we come not to *Chriſt.*

CHAP. III.

SECT. I.

FOR *JESUS CHRIST alone can eaſe us of this Load of Sin.* This is the *third* Point or Leſſon we are to learn from the Text. *Come unto me*, ſaith *Chriſt*, and therefore unto him muſt we go, or we muſt eternally deſpair of Eaſe and Refreſhment. For ever bleſſed be the *God* and *Father* of our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, for this his moſt wonderful Mercy and tender Compaſſion to us, the ſinful Sons of Men. *Adam* ſinned, and was aſhamed, as well he might, of the foul Load he had brought upon himſelf. But what Courſe took he to be eaſed of it? All we read of him is only this, he ran away, and would fain have hid himſelf from the Preſence of his offended *God*, as if he would have left his Load among the Trees of the Garden, or have loſt himſelf there, that the *Omniſcient* ſhould not find him out. But, alas, he had loſt himſelf ſufficiently already, by yielding to the Temptation of the Serpent; and if God had not found him out, like a wild

a wild Beaſt that is mortally wounded, and runs among the Thickets, to lay himſelf down and die, he had been loſt to all Eternity. Thus fooliſh Men, when they have ſinned, and their Conſciences begin to check them for it, the firſt Thing they do is to ſeek out ſome Covering for their Sin, and vainly labouring to elude *God*'s Eyes and Juſtice, run themſelves out of the Reach of Mercy. But ſuch is the abundant Love of *God* to Man, he would not thus loſe that Creature, whom he had mark'd out amongſt all the Reſt for himſelf, with his own *Image*; he would not ſuffer the Serpent to carry quite away the choiceſt Flower of the Garden; though it was ill blaſted, he was determined it ſhould not quite wither, but revive and flouriſh, though never again on Earth in ſo much Beauty and Glory as before. *God* calleth after *Adam*, finds out him and his Sin together, and of his own free Grace and Pity, promiſeth him to ſend one to be his Deliverer and his Phyſician, that ſhould heal *him*, and wound the *Serpent*; that ſhould eaſe him of his Burden, by taking it upon himſelf. O moſt admirable and ineſtimable Mercy! Who could have dared to hope that the great and glorious Ma-

jeſty of Heaven and Earth, ſo wickedly violated, and offended by a Creature of his own, made of the Duſt, ſhould thus condeſcend to follow the Sinner and Rebel with his loving Kindneſs, and gracious Pardon? That he ſhould, rather than utterly deſtroy a Creature thus form'd, himſelf contrive ſo wonderful a Way for his Recovery, as that of the Incarnation and Paſſion of his own eternal Son? By a Word he made him, by leſs than a Word, even by withdrawing that upholding Word of his Power, he might have deſtroyed him; but to ſave him, the eternal *Word muſt be made Fleſh, and dwell among us.* John i. 14. God promiſeth *Adam*, that *the Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head.* Gen. iii. 15. And, *This Seed* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *is Chriſt.* Gal. iii. 16. Even the eternal *Word*, *God*'s own and only begotten *Son*, even *Him*, *in the Fulneſs of Time*, *God ſent forth*, *made of a Woman.* Gal. iv. 4. *to be born of a pure Virgin.* Luke ii. 7. And named him *Jeſus*, *becauſe he was to ſave his People from their Sins.* Matt. i. 21. *Neither is there Salvation in any other*, *for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men*, *whereby we muſt be ſaved.* Acts iv. 12.

Here

Here then is that true *Joſhua* indeed, of whom that *other* was a *Type*, who can bring us, after all we have ſuffered by the Way, into Poſſeſſion of the promiſed Land, the heavenly *Canaan*. a Place of everlaſting Reſt from all our Wanderings, Labours and Enemies. *Moſes* may conduct us out of *Egypt*, the Land of thick Darkneſs, wherin we are born; the *Law* may be our Inſtructor and *Schoolmaſter*, teaching us our Duty to God and Man, to fit us for an higher Form: It bringeth us to the Knowledge of our Sins, by diſcovering unto us our Duty; and it maketh us feel our Miſery, by ſhewing us, together with our Duty, both our Inability to do it, and the Curſe that is due unto us for not doing it. Thus it fits and prepares us for a *Saviour*; but whilſt it bringeth us not through unto *Jeſus*, *of whom* yet *Moſes*, *in the Law and the Prophets did write*, John i. 45. it muſt needs leave us in a *Wilderneſs* of Perplexities, in a Confuſion of ſad Thoughts concerning ourſelves and our Condition, and there we muſt die, without a true *Joſhua* or *Jeſus*.

§. II. This therefore it nearly concerneth us to be thoroughly convinced of, as of a moſt certain and comfortable Truth,

that *Jesus is the Saviour of Sinners*, the only Person that can ease us of our heavy Load. And to this End, we are to call to Mind, That, as we are all conceived and born in Sin; so in Sin there be two Things which load us, and which must be removed, or else we can never enter into Rest. These two are the *Guilt* and the *Pollution* of Sin, already mentioned. *Sin is the Transgression of the Law.* 1 Joh. iii. 4. the Will of the great *God* and *Governor* of the World: And therefore layeth us open to his Wrath, it bringeth the Curse of the *Law* upon us, and layeth us under the Sentence of Condemnation. Sin is also a foul and loathsome Disease, it is an Uncleanness, which maketh us odious and abominable in the pure Eyes of the most holy God, and utterly indispoſeth us to take any Delight in him who is the only Happiness of our immortal Souls. Of these two Things we must be sensible, and when we are so, what are we the better, if we can find no Advocate or Favourite in Court, to procure our Pardon, nor Physician, to cure us of our Disease? If the *Law* hath discovered unto us our Misery, and the Sadness of our corrupt State, what Advantage can this be to us, if we can find

no *Goſpel*, no good Tidings of Salvation, or Word of Life? All this hitherto would be no better than to torment us yet alive, and put us to a long and lingering Death, and make us feel ourſelves a dying. We might very well ſay in St. *Paul*'s Words, *Rom.* vii. 9. *We were alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came, Sin revived, and we died.* So long as we ſaw not ourſelves in the Glaſs of the Word, which ſheweth us all our Deformities, we ſeemed to ourſelves beautiful Things; but when that was laid before our Eyes, and we were made to ſee what foul Work Sin had made with us, our good Opinions of ourſelves vaniſhed, and came to nothing. When we find by the Law what we ſhould be, and that we are not ſuch as we ſhould be; that we are Sinners, and under a Sentence of Death; when the thundering Voice of the Law hath awakened our Conſciences, to conſider this, what remaineth, but that our Hearts die within us, and all our vain Hopes and Comforts flee, and leave us in Deſpair? Thus it muſt needs be with us, if we be without a *Jeſus*.

§. III.

§. III. 1. As we are *guilty* and *condemned* Persons, a *Pardon* must either be granted us, or the Law must be executed upon us. The Sentence of the Law is to this Purpose: *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all Things that are written in the Book of the Law, to do them.* Gal. iii. 10. None of us have done them, and therefore, *Judgment is come upon all Men to Condemnation.* Rom. v. 18. What Course then must we now take? Or how shall we escape this Condemnation that is come upon us? He that is once guilty, cannot be so vain as to think he can make himself guiltless. The Offence is committed, the Law is broken, the Punishment is thereby become due, the Offender is by the Law to die, and *God*, the just *Judge of all the Earth, must do Right.* We can have nothing but Mercy to flee unto, nothing have our Souls to take Sanctuary in, but the Goodness of an offended *God.* His gracious Pardon is the only Thing which can do us good, and yet, what Way this may possibly be procured, we are at an utter Loss to contrive. We have no Worth in ourselves to deserve it, no past good Services, that we have done to *God*, have we to plead; no Promises of future Service, whatever we may promise, have

we

we of ourselves any Strength to perform: Nor know we of any Favourite of *God*, whose Interest with him may encourage us to rely on his Intercession. What must we do? None can grant a Pardon, but only that great Sovereign *King* of all the World, whose Law is broken, against whose Honour and Government the Sin is committed.

§. IV. Ask not here, as some are too bold to do, what *God* might, or could have done, if it had pleased him? Or whether, had he been willing so to do, he might not have passed by Man's Sin and Disobedience without Punishment, or have given him an absolute Pardon for his Sin, without demanding any Satisfaction to be made to his Justice, for the Violation of his Law? But search the Records of God's Doings, his sacred Word, and learn thence what he hath done; and then be so just to God, as to conclude, that whatsoever he hath done, must needs be most agreeable to the Rules of infinite Wisdom and Goodness. And truly, whatsoever foolish Men are apt to judge in Haste, led by Partiality to their Lusts, and a Desire of Impunity, or a Freedom of sinning without Fear of Punish-

Puniſhment, when they ſhall ſeriouſly ponder, even with thoſe imperfect Remains of Reaſon, which Sin hath left them, the Methods of *God*'s Dealing with ſinful Men, in Order to their Recovery by *Jeſus Chriſt*, they muſt needs be ſatisfied, that they ought not in Reaſon to expect or wiſh, that God ſhould do any more or better for the Sinner's Relief, than he hath done, and aſſured us he will do. Can it be thought a Thing reaſonable, that the great *Lord*, and juſt *Governor* of the World, who had made Man in all Reſpects able and fit to do unto him a reaſonable Service upon Earth, in rendering unto him the Honour and Glory due unto his Name, as the powerful Maker, right Owner, wiſe Governor, bountiful Preſerver, and ultimate End of the whole Creation, ſhould, when he had, againſt all the Obligations of Bleſſings already received, and Aſſurances of greater Bleſſings hereafter to be enjoy'd, and Declarations of the Evil which would come upon him by his Sin, wilfully tranſgreſs'd, and that by honouring the Devil, in believing him rather than God: Is it reaſonable, I ſay, to expect, that God ſhould wholly wink at all this, or grant the Offender an abſolute Pardon?

Such

Such a Pardon to ſuch an Offender, who had, by ſubmitting to the Devil's Temptation, when it was in his Power and Choice to have reſiſted him, given him that Power over him which belonged to God only, and brought himſelf to that Paſs, as to do almoſt nothing elſe but Sin? To what End is Government ſet up, and Laws enacted, if it be certain Men will break them, and if it be reaſonable for them, when they have broken them, to hope for an abſolute Pardon? How can we imagine it ſhould appear to us, that God doth govern the World in Righteouſneſs, if he ſhould ſuffer Diſobedience to his Government to go unpuniſhed, and make no viſible Difference between his dutiful Children and wicked Rebels.

Suppoſe we now the moſt that can rationally be ſuppoſed: *Firſt*, That it was not inconſiſtent with the Truth and Juſtice of God, not to inflict on Man the whole Penalty that was threatned in the Law, as we are ſure it was not, becauſe it was not inflicted on him. Every Act of Grace doth not render a Governor falſe or unjuſt; if ſo, there could be no Room for any Thing but the utmoſt Severity and Rigour. *Secondly*, Suppoſe, which is very true, that *God's* eſſential

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eſſential Goodneſs inclineth him to Mercy and Compaſſion, and maketh him ready to embrace all Methods of magnifying his Clemency, and very willing to pardon. Suppoſe, *thirdly*, that Man having offended *God* by Sin, did yet retain ſo much Knowledge of the Goodneſs of *God*'s Nature, as might encourage him, even without any Promiſe, to hope God would ſhew Mercy to him, and not quite deſtroy him. Suppoſe all this, yet ſtill we muſt ſuppoſe one Thing more: That Man did, together with the Knowledge of *God*'s Goodneſs, which gave him ſome Hope, retain alſo ſo much Knowledge of *God*'s *governing Juſtice*, and tender Regard to the Honour of his *Government*, as would forbid him to hope that *God* would, how merciful ſoever, declare his *Mercy* in ſuch a Way, as he might not equally declare his *Juſtice* alſo, and Unwillingneſs to encourage the leaſt Diſobedience to his Laws. However therefore, we may think it well-becoming the *Goodneſs* of *God*, to abate ſomething of the Penalty, yet we muſt needs think it as becoming his *Juſtice*, as our *Governor*, to ſhew himſelf diſpleaſed at Sin, and to make the Sinner ſenſible of his Diſpleaſure,

and

and fearful how he did offend again for the Time to come. If then we judge it not unfit that a *Pardon* ſhould be granted, yet muſt we alſo think it reaſonable it ſhould be ſo qualified, as that the Offender might perceive how hardly it was obtained, by the great Price was paid for it, and by the Loſs of ſome Privileges, or undergoing ſome Part, at leaſt, of the Penalty, be kept in continual Remembrance of the Evil of Sin; and, by ſome new Bond, be bound to his good Behaviour for the Time to come, and not be encouraged, by an abſolute and unlimited Pardon, to think that Pardon of paſt Sins is a Licence to ſin again, or a Diſcharge from the Obligation of the Law, by which he was bound to ſerve and honour his Maker.

§. V. Our own Reaſon cannot chuſe but ſay, that all this might very well become the Goodneſs and Juſtice of *God* our Governor; and let us ſee if all the World can think of an eaſier Way to effect all this, than that which our good *God* hath, of his infinite Wiſdom choſen and revealed to us in his Goſpel. Obſerve what is read in St *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Romans*, Chap. iii. 23, 24, &c.

All

All have ſinned, and come ſhort of the Glory of God; being juſtified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt, whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation, through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteouſneſs for the Remiſſion of Sins that are paſt, through the Forbearance of God. To declare, I ſay, at this Time, his Righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the Juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus. The clear Underſtanding of theſe Words will ſhew us the Reaſonableneſs of *God*'s Dealings with us, as we are Sinners, and upon what Terms we may expect a Pardon from him. Suppoſe then it be aſked, in what Condition all Men are without *Chriſt*; we are here told, that *all have ſinned*; all Mankind, whether they be *Jews*, that were under the Law given by *Moſes*, or *Gentiles*, never oblIged by that Law, but by the *Law of Nature* only; they have all broken the Law under which they were, as the *Apoſtle* proves more fully in this Epiſtle, and ſo are all Sinners. What now is the Conſequence of this univerſal Corruption of Mankind? It is this; that they are all *come ſhort of the Glory of God*. If we ſhould here, by *the Glory of God*, underſtand the *Image* of *God*, wherein

wherein Man was created, we are all fallen ſhort of it; that is, have leſs of it than was at firſt, as it conſiſted principally in Wiſdom and Holineſs. If by *Glory* we underſtand the *Glory* and *Honour* due from us to *God*, we are come ſhort of it, by Sin we have robbed him of it, and are caſt behind-hand in our Duty, and unable to glorify *God* in a perfect Obedience to his Law. If again by *Glory*, be meant the *Praiſe* or *Approbation* of *God*, which he giveth to Goodneſs, we are come ſhort of it; we cannot pleaſe God, or do that which is acceptable unto him: Or if, *laſtly*, we underſtand by *Glory*, that *Glory* which *God* beſtoweth upon his obedient Subjects, either in this or the future Life, we are fallen ſhort of it, having no Righteouſneſs of our own, unto which it is due: We are by Sin caſt behind in our Race to Life and Happineſs; and ſo, without a *Jeſus*, muſt loſe all, and periſh eternally. Now ſeeing there ſhall be a *Day of Judgment*, when every one of us muſt give an Account of himſelf to God, and receive the Things he hath here done in the Body, whether it be good or bad; and the juſt Reward of his Deeds, how ſhall any of us eſcape Condemnation? What ſhall we then

have

have to plead for ourſelves, why the Sentence of the Law ſhould not be executed upon us? Or upon what Account can we hope to be acquitted? The *Apoſtle* anſwereth this in the following Words: *Being juſtified freely by his Grace. Juſt*, by keeping the Law, we are not, and therefore we cannot *be juſtified*, or *pronounced juſt* by our juſt Judge, on that Account; for ſo ſhould he judge falſly. That Law, therefore, however it obliges us to Duty, is not the Law by which we ſhall be judged; for it requiring perfect Obedience, and threatening Death to the Sinner, we, having ſinned, can hope for nothing but Death, if we be judged by that Law, and cannot be juſtified, or acquitted in Judgement: It muſt be therefore by ſome Act of *Grace*, Favour, or Pardon, which God hath been pleaſed freely to grant unto us; and this is that we muſt then plead for ourſelves, and wholly rely upon. But what is this *Grace* which we are to truſt to? Is it an utter aboliſhing or abrogating the Law? That cannot be; for that would be to leave us at Liberty, whether we would honour our Creator or no, or obey his Will. Is it an abſolute Pardon for the Breach of that

Law?

Law? Nor that neither; for that would but ſet us on even Ground, to begin the World anew, and ſet us to the ſame Taſk, which we want Strength to perform; and ſo we ſhould be but where we were before. That we may therefore ſee what this Grace is, we are firſt to enquire upon what Conſideration it was given us. And here we are told, it was *through the Redemption that was in, or by Jeſus Chriſt*; *God*, the eternal *Son* of the *Father*, condeſcending to be made *Man*, hath, in our Nature, done the Will of *God*, and to make Satisfaction for our Offences, was content to die: A great Price and Ranſom hath he paid for us; not *Silver nor Gold, but his own moſt precious Blood:* He hath offered unto God an expiatory Sacrifice for our Sins, of ſo great Worth and Value, that it cannot now ſeem any Diſparagement to God's righteous Government, to admit Sinners to Favour again, in Conſideration of it. It is he, *Jeſus Chriſt*, who was by *God*, ſeeing well what Men would do, *fore-ordained, before the Foundation of the World*; 1 Pet. i. 20. as that *only Mediator between God and Men.* 1 Tim. ii. 5. by whoſe Merits and Mediation, Sinners might find

Mercy

Mercy and Acceptance with God. This gracious Design of his, he did from the Beginning, as he saw fit, declare to the World; not all at once, but by Degrees, in Promises and Prophecies, in Types and Shadows, more or less darkly and obscurely, as he pleased, till the Fullness of Time should come, when he intended fully and clearly to reveal it. More particularly, in the *most holy Place*, or *Holy of Holies*, stood the *Ark*, with the Law in it, the *Covering* of which *Ark* was called the *Propitiatory*, and above it stood two *Cherubims*, shadowing it with their Wings. This was a *Symbol* of *God*'s gracious Presence with his People; and, *Exod.* xxv. 22. *Num.* vii. 89. hence was *God* wont to speak unto *Moses*, and give forth the sacred *Oracles*. Here was the High-Priest to appear before God on the Day of *Attonement*; and God did thus shew how he did accept of the Sacrifices offered for the Attonement of Sins, which did all serve to shadow forth unto them that one perfect *Sacrifice* which *Christ* was afterwards to offer *once for all*. Now, saith the *Apostle*, this same *Christ*, *God hath* now *set forth to be a Propitiation* (so we read it) *through Faith in his Blood.*

Blood. Now in the *Goſpel*-Days, the Time prefixed by *God* being come, he hath propounded, or ſet forth before the Eyes of Men, the very *Subſtance* of thoſe *Shadows*, the *Anti-type* to all thoſe *Types*, the Perſon of the *Son*, to be the true *Propitiatory* (ſo it ſhould be read) *Mercy-ſeat*, or *Throne of Grace*, in, and by whom, God doth manifeſt his gracious Preſence with Men, he being the true *Immanuel, God with us*; *God manifeſted in the Fleſh, the Word made Fleſh, and dwelling among us*, in whom God is propitious and favourable to us, and ſo far reconciled to Sinners, by the Sacrifice he hath offered, as to accept all to Mercy, in Conſideration of the Blood which he hath ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sins. All, I ſay, that will believe the *Blood of Chriſt* to be the Price of their Souls, and look upon it as the *Blood* of the Covenant, that *everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. xlii. 20. that *better Covenant*, whereof Chriſt *is Mediator*, Heb. viii. 6. and ſo ſubmit themſelves to the Terms of this Covenant, ſhall find Mercy, notwithſtanding all the Sins that they have formerly committed. Now this Courſe it hath pleaſed God to take, *to declare his Righteouſneſs for the Remiſſion of Sins*

that

that are paſt, through the Forbearance of God: For herein we have a clear Demonſtration of God's Righteouſneſs, as he is both the *juſt* and *gracious Governor* of Mankind. Some might be apt to queſtion how it could be conſiſtent with the Juſtice of God, ſo long to ſuffer Men to run on in Sin, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, without bringing them to ſpeedy Puniſhment for the ſame: *Becauſe Judgment is not ſpeedily executed upon evil Doers*, Men are too apt to think God ſuch an one as themſelves. *Eccl.* viii. 11. regardleſs of Right or Wrong. But they are deceived; howſoever God is long ſuffering and ſlow to Anger, yet he doth ſufficiently declare his Juſtice, even whilſt he magnifieth his Mercy; and whilſt he uſeth much *Forbearance* and Patience towards Sinners, that his *Forbearance*, if poſſible, *may lead them to Repentance*, Rom. ii. 4. yet he is not negligent in his Government, or regardleſs of Men's Behaviour under his merciful and gentle Government. He might unto ſome ſeem to have quite *remitted* the Sins of thoſe whom he had not yet puniſhed, but it was no *Remiſſion* (nor indeed doth the Word ſignify any ſuch Thing) but only a paſſing-by,

or

or *a winking at*, as it is ſaid, *Act.* xvii. 30. an *Over-looking* their Sins for the Time, to ſee if they would repent, and fly to the Remedy promiſed. That this was the gracious Deſign of God, Men formerly might underſtand and ſee, by the Light held forth unto them in the *Law* and the Prophets; and as many as had Eyes to ſee, did ſee it in the Promiſe, though yet afar off. However now, ſince the promiſed *Meſſiah*, in whom they believed, and whom they expected, is come into the World, and hath done and ſuffered all thoſe Things which were foretold concerning him, *now* at this Time, God hath hereby manifeſtly declared his *Righteouſneſs* in all that he hath done. He hath ſhewed abundantly that he is *juſt*, and would not ſuffer his Law to be broken with Impunity, or grant a Pardon to Sinners, without Satisfaction for their Offences: If they die not, a great Price is paid to redeem them, the *Blood* of the ſpotleſs *Lamb of God*; and it is upon this very valuable Conſideration, that they are received to Mercy: It appeareth then, though God doth *juſtify* or acquit them in Judgment, it is becauſe they have an *Advocate with the Father, even Jeſus Chriſt*, the

the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for their Sins. 1 Joh. ii. 2. His Perſon is of ſuch Dignity, and his Merits ſo great, that he hath well deſerved that God ſhould do all this for his Sake: And it is farther plain, that God hath not granted any abſolute Pardon to Sinners, but hath condeſcended to treat with them upon new and eaſier Terms of Agreement; he hath eſtabliſhed a new *Covenant* of Grace, and hath given unto Chriſt all thoſe who ſhall enter into this Covenant, and faithfully keep it. He is thus the *Juſtifier of all them that believe* in, or *that are of the Faith of Jeſus*, that continue in this Covenant, as well faithful to him, as confiding in him. In ſhort, Chriſt hath obtained this Grace and Favour for us, that we ſhall not now be judged by the Law of Innocence, and according to the firſt Covenant of Works, *but by the Law of Faith*, Rom. iii. 17. which is the *Law of Liberty*; Jam. i. 25. wherein, though there be no Allowance to Sin, yet there is Proviſion made for Mercy, by an Abatement of the Rigor of the Law, and making Allowances for our Infirmities, and accepting of Repentance and Sincerity for Chriſt's Sake. We ſee now how *this Grace*

is given us in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. i. 9. And that there is *no coming unto the Father but by him.* Joh. xiv. 6.

§. VI. 2. Yet is not this all, for as we wanted a *Pardon*, as we were *guilty* Persons, so also do we need a *Physician*, as we are *sick*, and a Cleanser, as we are filthy and polluted. We are all unclean, and the Decree is gone forth, and cannot be reversed, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* Heb. xii. 14. There *shall in no wise enter into the New Hierusalem any Thing that defileth.* Rev. xxi. 27. Every unclean or sinful Thing is odious, and an Abomination unto God, as being most contrary to the Purity of his Nature. Fire and Water may better agree together, than Man's Uncleanness and God's infinite Purity. *He is of purer Eyes than to behold Evil, and cannot look on Iniquity.* Hab. i. 13. Therefore doth he command us all *to be holy as he is holy.* 1 Pet. i. 16. And it is the Blessing that belongeth to the *pure in Heart, to see God.* Matt. v. 8. *Whosoever* therefore *hath this Hope in him, of seeing God, is to purify himself even as he is pure.* 1 Joh. iii. 3. Consider Holiness, *first*, as it is a great Part of Happiness, as it is the re-

ſtoring of *God's Image* in us, and as it is the perfecting of our Nature; or conſider it, as it is that Quality and Temper of Soul, which alone can diſpoſe us, and render us capable of enjoying complacentially, or delighting ourſelves in the Preſence of a moſt *holy God*; it is very plain, that Heaven itſelf can be no Heaven to us without it. But now, how ſhall ſinful Men attain to this neceſſary Holineſs? Can a Sinner, whoſe Sinfulneſs is become even a ſecond Nature to him, purify or cleanſe himſelf? *How can he be clean that is born of a Woman?* Job xxv. 4. *Who can ſay, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my Sin?* Prov. xx. 9. No Man living can ſay this with any Colour of Truth. But here again muſt we flee unto *Jeſus Chriſt*. In him alone *is the Fountain opened for Sin and for Uncleanneſs.* Zech. xiii. 1. *It is he that is made of God unto us both Righteouſneſs and Sanctification.* 1 Cor. i. 30. They that are ſanctified, are *ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus.* 1 Cor. i. 2. *He gave himſelf for his Church, that he might ſanctify it, and cleanſe it with the waſhing of the Water by the Word.* Eph. v. 26. The *Holy Spirit* of *God*, which is our *Sanctifier*, and can make us holy, is the *Spirit* of *Chriſt*, and is given unto us

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in and through *Christ*. *If we have not this Spirit of Christ, we are none of his.* Rom. viii. 9. *And hereby know we that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which hath he given us,* 1 Joh. iii. 24. *We are sanctified and justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* 1 Cor. vi. 11. So then we can have no Hope of being saved, and brought to our everlasting Rest by *Christ*, except we receive of him both *Pardon* and *Holiness*. However, we consider ourselves to be laden, it is *Christ alone can give us Rest*. Which was our third Point.

CHAP. IV.

THE *fourth* is this. *All they that are laden with Sin are freely invited by Christ unto himself.* This is a very comfortable Doctrine indeed, that there is no Man living, how great a Sinner soever he hath been, or yet is, but he may have free Access unto *Christ*, as his *Saviour*, if he will *come* unto him for Salvation. *Christ* freely inviteth us all, he excepteth not the very worst of us all, he maketh the same Promise of Rest

unto all, let the Burden we now carry be ever ſo heavy. Unleſs therefore we could find a Man in the World that is no Sinner, one that is above the common Fate of Mankind, and ſo hath nothing of that Guilt and Pollution upon his Perſon and Nature, which we all derive from *Adam*, we cannot find a Man, of whom we can ſay, that he hath no Invitation to come unto *Chriſt* for Reſt. If ſuch a Man could poſſibly be found, we muſt needs except him; for very true it is, which *Chriſt* hath told us, ſaying, *I came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* Matt. ix. 13. He ſaid this to thoſe that had a very great Opinion, but a very falſe one, of their own Righteouſueſs; and he ſaid it to clear himſelf of the Imputation of Unrighteouſneſs, which they endeavour'd to faſten upon him, for his ſo freely converſing with *Publicans* and *Sinners*. He came to be our *Phyſician*, to heal us, and ſaith he, v. 12. *They that be whole need not a Phyſician, but they that are ſick.* In neither of theſe Sayings did he ſuppoſe that any were *whole* or *righteous*, and ſtood in no Need of his Help; but he intimateth that he came to offer Health to all, even the moſt deſperately ſick,

ſick, and therefore converſed with the worſt of them, to ſhew he excepted none, nor ſhould any periſh for want of a Phyſician; only ſuch as thoſe proud *Phariſees*, that in Confidence of their own Righteouſneſs, reject his Mercy, ſhould die in their Sins, not for Want of, but for deſpiſing a Saviour. *He juſtifieth the Ungodly.* Rom. iv. 5. Thoſe that have not a legal Righteouſneſs of their own to plead, but if examined and tried by the Law of Innocence, or by the Law of *Moſes*, ſhall certainly be found great Sinners, and ungodly Perſons, he came to ſhew unto them a new Way whereby they might obtain Mercy, and be acquitted. All Sinners then, and ungodly Men, he calleth and inviteth unto him, not excepting the very worſt among them. *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the World to ſave Sinners, of whom I am chief*, ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Tim. i. 15. It is a certain Truth, and to him that conſidereth his own Condition, muſt needs be very acceptable and welcome. St. *Paul* indeed had been a very great Sinner, he had violently perſecuted them that called on the Name of *Chriſt*; *he compelled them to blaſpheme, and was exceeding*

mad againſt them. Acts xxvi. 11. *And when the Blood of the Martyr* Stephen *was ſhed, he alſo was ſtanding by, and conſenting unto his Death, and kept the Raiment of them that ſlew him.* Act. xxii 20. Yet he obtained Mercy, yea, *For this Cauſe,* ſaith he, *I obtained Mercy, that in me firſt Jeſus Chriſt might ſhew forth all long-ſuffering, for a Pattern to them that ſhould hereafter believe on him to Life everlaſting.* 1 Tim. i. 16. He was thus made a Monument of Mercy to all future Ages, that all Sinners, reading or hearing of his *Converſion,* might be encouraged thereby, not to abuſe the long-ſuffering of *Chriſt* by continuing in Sin, in Hope of future Mercy; but how vile ſoever they have formerly been, not to deſpair of finding the like Acceptance, if they do, as St. *Paul* did, hearken unto the Call and Invitation of *Chriſt.*

God did never leave Men without ſufficient Evidence of his Readineſs to accept of all penitent Sinners. Hear what he ſaid of old by his Prophet. *Have I any Pleaſure at all that the Wicked ſhould die, ſaith the* LORD GOD, *and not that he ſhould turn from his Way and live?* Ezek. xviii. 23. He anſwered his own Queſtion to the full Satisfaction of poor

poor diſconſolate Sinners. *As I live, ſaith the LORD GOD, I have no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way, and live.* Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Thus did *God* of old aſſure Men by his *Oath*, that he delighteth in Mercy. And he hath left this upon Record for ever, for the Encouragement of all Sinners and wicked Men, not to go on in their Sins one Moment, in Hope of Mercy, but to turn from their evil Ways ſpeedily, by a thorough Repentance. And he encourageth us thus to do, by declaring unto us the exceeding Goodneſs of his Nature, and his Eaſineſs to be reconciled to every one that turneth unto him. *God's Goodneſs* is the very *Name* whereby he would be known unto the World. *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth, keeping Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion and Sin.* Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. *A God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, ſlow to Anger, and of great Kindneſs.* Nehem. ix. 17. *He is gracious unto Man, and ſaith, deliver him from going down into the Pit, I have found a Ranſom.* Job xxxiii. 24. Did *God* declare himſelf to be thus gracious

in the Days of old only? Hath he now forgotten to be gracious in the Days of the *Goſpel?* Was his Name *JEHOVAH* good and gracious? And ſhall we not think his Name *JESUS* is ſo too? Can there be a more comfortable Name than *God our Saviour?* Is not the *Goſpel* all *glad Tydings* of Mercy and Goodneſs? Said not the *Angel*, at the Birth of *CHRIST*, *Behold, I bring you glad Tidings of great Joy, which ſhall be to all People: For unto you is born this Day, in the City of* David, *a Saviour, which is CHRIST the LORD?* Luke ii. 10, 11. *God ſent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World through him might be ſaved.* Joh. iii. 17. To bring Men to repent and turn to God for Salvation, through *Chriſt*, is the very Deſign of the Goſpel. *That Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins ſhould be preached in his Name among all Nations.* Luke xxiv. 47. Is there any Man excepted in the whole Goſpel from Pardon, but he alone who ſhall exclude himſelf, and will not accept of it as it is there tendred unto him? Is it not ſaid expreſly, *that Chriſt was to taſte of Death for every Man?* Heb. ii. 9. And that *this is good and acceptable in God's Sight, that all Men ſhould*

be ſaved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth. 1 Tim. ii. 4. Accordingly we find, that *Chriſt* ceaſeth not to ſend abroad his Meſſengers continually, to call and invite in his Name, to woo, intreat, beſeech, with all Earneſtneſs, and by all convincing Arguments to perſuade, and even *compel* Men, without Exception of any, to repent, and come, and accept of Mercy; yea, to help, and lead, and ſupport them, and to do all Things for them that they can reaſonably deſire, to fit and prepare them for Acceptance. To preach and proclaim the good Will of God towards them, to hold forth unto them, even to the blindeſt Heathen amongſt them, the glorious Light of the Goſpel of Chriſt. *To open their Eyes, and to turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, that they may receive Forgiveneſs of Sins, and Inheritance among them which are ſanctified by Faith, that is in him.* Acts xxvi. 18. He gave his Apoſtles a very full and unlimitted Commiſſion: *Go*, ſaith he, *into all the World, and preach the Goſpel unto every Creature; he that believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved, and he that believeth not ſhall be damned.* Mark xvi. 15. We muſt needs therefore acknowledge

the Truth of what the Apoſtle hath ſo plainly told us, that *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs and wordly Luſt, we ſhould live ſoberly and righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World; looking for the bleſſed Hope and glorious Appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.* Tit. ii. 11, 12, 13. As *God was in Chriſt, reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing their Treſpaſſes unto them*, this was that *Forbearance* of God, and *Remiſſion* or overlooking of Sins paſt, before mentioned; ſo that Men might be ſtill ſenſible of his wonderful Goodneſs, *he hath*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *committed unto us the Word of Reconciliation. Now then we are Embaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſt's Stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him.* 2 Cor. v. 19, 20, &c. *Whoſoever will*, ſaith Chriſt, *let him take of the Water of Life freely.* Rev. xxii. 17. *Him that cometh to me I will in no wiſe caſt out.* Joh. vi. 37. What can we now expect more than all this, to aſſure us that all laden Sinners, without

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Exception, are invited unto *Chriſt?* And ſhall it not ſeem ſtrange, that Men will rather ſit down and ſtudy for nice Diſtinctions, whereby to limit the Goodneſs of *God*, and null the Univerſality of his Grace, and rob themſelves and others of the Comfort thereof, rather than yield to the plain Words of Scripture? Certainly Men may ſin againſt the *Goſpel* as well as againſt the *Law*; and to reject the *Goſpel*, and not embrace it as the *Power of God unto Salvation*, is to ſin againſt the *Goſpel:* Nay, I think, it is very ſure, that no Man ſhall periſh, but for rejecting or diſobeying the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*; but if the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt*, if Pardon of Sins through *Chriſt*, be not freely offered to all Men, they at leaſt to whom it is not offered, ſin not in refuſing of it. If the wicked'ſt Man do ſin when he believeth not, or diſobeyeth the *Goſpel*, and for this Sin ſhall be damned, it is plain that the *Goſpel* was offered unto him, that he was invited to the Mercies of it. But what now is required of us, that we may reap the Benefit of this Invitation, and may be made Partakers of this loving Kindneſs of the *Lord?* This will be anſwered in the next Propoſition.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

SECT. I.

OUR next Leſſon we are to learn is this: *Whoſoever will have that Reſt, unto which he is invited by Chriſt, muſt come unto Chriſt.* That which we need, and *he* hath promiſed, is *Reſt*; but we muſt *move* before we *reſt*. Sitting down under our Load will not eaſe us: much leſs will running from *Chriſt* by our Diſobedience to his *Goſpel*, eaſe us, which Way ſoever we go; but we muſt *come unto him*. This is all that *Chriſt* requireth of us; this is the great Duty that is incumbent upon us, as we are *Chriſtians*, to *come unto Chriſt*. It is not the Work of an Hour, or a Day; but of the whole Life. It concerneth us therefore to underſtand it well, ſeeing upon the doing of it the Succeſs doth wholly depend. If we do it not, or if we do it wrong; if we come not to Chriſt, or if we come a wrong Way, we miſs what we would have, and loſe our Labour. It is therefore now our Task to learn what

what this *coming* ſignifieth. *Coming* is *Believing*; and to *come* to *Chriſt*, is to *believe* in *Chriſt*. This we learn from *Chriſt* himſelf, who is the ſoundeſt Interpreter of his own Words. To learn this we ſhall need to do no more, but mind his Diſcourſe in one *Chapter*, John vi. It is there ſaid, ver. 5. *That a great Company came unto him.* Here is no Figure, theſe came unto him to ſee him and hear him, and were miraculouſly fed by him with a very few Loaves. This Entertainment pleaſed them ſo well, that after he was departed thence to another Place, they followed him. And thus there be very many that are willing enough to *come* unto *Chriſt*, and follow him for his *Loaves*; *that is*, they are willing to be accounted *Chriſtians*, and they make a plauſible Profeſſion and Shew of being his Diſciples and Followers, and all this is becauſe of thoſe temporal Advantages and Privileges they reap and enjoy in the Places where they live, where no other Religion is countenanced by Law. But ſuch a *Coming* as this will bring no Man to *reſt* in *Chriſt*. Therefore, ver. 7. He telleth theſe his Followers, that if they will come unto him to Purpoſe, they muſt *not labour for the Meat which*

perisheth, but for the Meat which endureth unto everlasting Life. And that they might not be ignorant how to come unto him for this *Meat*, he explaineth this *Coming to him* by *believing on him*, ver. 35. *He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth in me shall never thirst.* Whereas *Hungring* and *Thirsting* are all one in Sense, so are *coming* and *believing*. Again, to the same Persons he saith, ver. 36. *Ye have seen me, and believe not.* But saith he, ver. 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, that is,* shall *believe* in me, which ye, though you now see me, do not. *Coming* therefore and *Believing* are the same Things. And is this now *all* that *Christ* requireth of us, that we may have Rest, only that we *believe* in him? This is all: For *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* Joh. iii. 16. If this be all, then many wicked Men begin to flatter themselves, that they are safe enough. What though they be wicked, yet *Christ* died for the *Ungodly*, and calls for no more, but to *believe*; and we, say they, can believe this as well as others, and therefore we are as sure

ſure as others to have *Reſt* by *Chriſt* our *Faith*, which is the only Thing required of us, and will ſave us. But we muſt take heed that we conclude not too haſtily. To *come* is to *believe*, that's true; and he that *believeth* ſhall be *ſaved*, that's true too. But we muſt know what this *Believing* importeth, how much it containeth in it, before we can conclude that we *believe* unto Salvation. It is not any Kind of *Faith* that will bring a Man to Reſt. *The Devils believe*, and what are they the better for that? Have they any Hopes of being ſaved by their *Faith?* No, they know the contrary, and therefore *they tremble.* Jam. ii. 19. *Simon Magus* the Sorcerer *believed*, Acts viii. 13. yet was he a condemned *Heretick.* There is a *dead Faith* which *worketh not*, Jam. ii. 26. And there is a *living* or *lively* Faith, which is in a Man as a Principle of new *Life*, and of a lively ſpiritual Motion, carrying the Soul unto *Chriſt* and after *Chriſt.* We muſt therefore be careful that we miſtake not the one of theſe for the other.

§. II. We *believe* a Thing, when we are perſuaded it is true. So when *Chriſt* telleth us that he is the *Meſſiah* or *Chriſt*, that

that he is *true God*, the *only begotten Son of the Father*; that he is true *Man* alſo, the Son of a pure *Virgin*; that he *died* for us on the *Croſs*, and *roſe again the third Day*, and *is gone up into Heaven*, and *ſitteth at the right Hand of the Father*, *making Interceſſion for us*, and *that he will come again to judge the Quick and the Dead*; *that whoſoever believeth and is baptized ſhall be ſaved*, *but he that believeth not ſhall be damned*: All this we take to be *true*, and ſo are ſaid to *believe* it. Thus far we do well, and it is our Duty. And this is a *true Faith*, and a neceſſary *Faith*. But this is not *all*, and it is but a Part of our Duty, and is not that which is meant by *coming unto Chriſt*, the *Faith* whereby we are *juſtified* and ſaved, and find *Reſt*.

Some there may be, who think they believe aright upon another Ground; they do not only believe theſe doctrinal Truths, but they believe them with a peculiar Application of them to themſelves. They ſay, they are perſuaded, that they are God's *elect Children*, *predeſtinated*, *called*, *adopted in Chriſt Jeſus*; that they are *juſtified*, and that their Sins are forgiven already, and that they ſhall aſſuredly be ſaved: That they have not the

the leaſt doubting in themſelves of all this, but can confidently thus *apply Chriſt*, and all that he hath done and ſuffered, to themſelves, and can confide in him as their *Saviour*, and comfort themſelves in this Perſuaſion, being come up, as they ſuppoſe, to the *Fulneſs* of *Faith*, or full Aſſurance of their Salvation by *Chriſt*. This is indeed a *Faith*, and a *Believing*; but it may be a *falſe Faith*, and the believing of a *Lie*. They that ſay, they believe all this, may yet have no ſound Reaſon or ſufficient Ground for believing it; all this Confidence may be built only upon their own vain Imaginations, and ſo it is a Believing in themſelves, and not in Chriſt. Though therefore it may be true, that they do believe all this, yet all this that they do believe may be falſe; and be ſure of this, that no Man is juſtified by believing a Falſe-hood, or a meer Fiction of his own Brain. Nay, yet more; ſuppoſe we, that they do not only groundleſly believe this, but that the Thing be really true which they thus believe, yet is not this that *Faith* whereby a Man is *juſtified?* It is not that *Coming to Chriſt*, unto which *Reſt* is aſſured. For if a Man be not juſ-

juſtified before he believeth he is juſtified, he believeth he is juſtified when he is not, and ſo believeth a Falſhood, and that cannot juſtify him. And if he be juſtified before he believe he is juſtified, and whoſoever is juſtified be juſtified by *Faith*, then is he not juſtified by this *latter Faith*, whereby he believeth himſelf to be juſtified, but by a *Faith* which went before that. He that believeth that he is *come to Chriſt*, either is *come to Chriſt*, when he ſo believeth, or he is not: If he be not then *come to Chriſt*, he believeth that to be, which is not; that is, he believeth a Faſhood; and if he be already *come to Chriſt*, it is plain his believing this afterward did not bring him to *Chriſt:* Now it is *coming* unto *Chriſt* to which *Reſt* is promiſed, and not to a Man's believing that he is come to him. We cannot believe we are juſtified, but we muſt believe that we are *Believers*, becauſe only *Believers* are juſtified; and to believe we are *Believers*, is to believe we have true juſtifying *Faith*, which we muſt have, before we can believe truly that we have it; and therefore this believing that we have it, is not it. Hence 'tis plain, that though to be perſuaded that we

are juſtified, and have Peace with *God*, may be much of that *Reſt* which *God* ſometimes giveth here in this Life to thoſe that are *come* unto *Chriſt*; yet it cannot be that *Faith* whereby we are ſaid to *come*. *Being juſtified by Faith*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Rom. v. 1. No Man can deny but the *Senſe* of this *Peace with God* in a Man's own Conſcience, is a very ſweet and comfortable Reſt unto his Soul; and the ſtronger his Perſwaſion is, that he hath this Peace, the more at Reſt he muſt needs be within himſelf. But then it is eaſy enough to conceive, that ſuch a Senſe or Reſt muſt follow that *Peace*, and that *Peace* followeth *Juſtification*, and Juſtification is by *Faith*; and this *Faith* is our *coming to Chriſt*.

§. III. Seeing now this *Faith* is neither a bare believing the Truth, nor a ſtrong Perſwaſion of Man's own good State or Condition, let us now enquire wherein it conſiſts, or what indeed it is. This we ſhall be beſt able to diſcern, by beholding it in that moſt eminent and highly commended Example of

of a Believer, *Abraham*; for by *Faith* was he *juſtified*, and his Faith is ſaid to be imputed to him for Righteouſneſs. *And they which are of Faith, the ſame are the Children of* Abraham, *and are bleſſed with faithful* Abraham. Gal. iii. 6, 7, and 9. Obſerve then but what kind of Faith *Abraham* had, and that kind of Faith muſt ours be. We ſhall obſerve this Faith of *Abraham* in three *Inſtances* only at this Time. The *firſt* is this; *God* biddeth *Abraham* go out of his Country, from his Kindred and his Father's Houſe, into a ſtrange Land, of which he knew nothing, promiſing to make him a great Nation, and to bleſs him. *Gen.* xii. 1, *&c.* *And Abraham*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *went out, not knowing whither he went.* Heb. xi. 8. Here we ſee his *Faith*; he was ſo well ſatisfied with *God*'s Word of *Promiſe*, and was ſo firmly perſwaded of his Truth and Faithfulneſs, that he made no Scruple at all of yielding a preſent Obedience to his Word of *Command*: He, without all Diſpute, left his Friends, his Home, his preſent Enjoyments and Hopes in his own Country, and his Father's Houſe, and followed *God*, though he knew not whither

whither, nor what Difficulties he might meet with by the Way, he truſted *God* with all. The *ſecond* Inſtance is this: *God* promiſeth *Abraham* to give him a *Son* of *Sarah* his Wife, when ſhe was barren, and both of them were now grown old, and that he would multiply his *Seed* into many Nations, even as the Stars of Heaven, and to bleſs all Nations in his *Seed*. *And* Abraham *believed God, and it was counted to him for Righteouſneſs.* Gen. xv. 6. Here again was *Abraham*'s Faith, That *even againſt Hope he believed in Hope, that he might become the Father of many Nations. He conſidered not his own Body now dead, when he was about an hundred Years old, neither yet the Deadneſs of* Sarah's *Womb. He ſtaggered not at the Promiſe of God through Unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God; and being fully perſwaded that what he had promiſed he was able to perform. And therefore it was imputed unto him for Righteouſneſs.* Rom. iv. 18, *&c. Thirdly*, Now when *God* had given *Abraham* this *Son*, which he had promiſed him, he commandeth him to take this very *Son*, his *only Son Iſaac, whom he loved*, this very Son, in whoſe

Seed

Seed he had promiſed, that *all the Nations of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed*, and to offer him up unto *God* for a Burnt-offering. *Gen.* xxii. 2. Here was a very hard Taſk indeed, a Work commanded to be done, which might ſeem to undo all that was hoped for, and make void at one Blow, all the Promiſes that God had made him. Conſider but a few of the Circumſtances, and it will appear to be ſo. *Firſt*, it is againſt Nature for a Father to kill his own Child, and with his own Hand too. How ſhould *Abraham* ſo caſt off the Nature of a Man, and be ſo inhuman, as to butcher his Son? *Secondly*, he was his *beloved* Son, one that had been a dutiful Child, and of whom he was very tender, yea the Son of his *old Age*; and it is uſual with old Parents to be very fond of their young Children, as thoſe little Images of themſelves, in whom they hope to live in the Memory of future Ages, when they themſelves are gone hence. How ſhould *Abraham* ſo pull out the Bowels of fatherly Love and natural Affection, as to kill the beloved Son of his old Age? *Thirdly*, *Sarah* had been long barren, and *Abraham* grown old, without Children,

Children, and even paſt all Hopes, in the ordinary courſe of Nature, to have a Child; how muſt both he and his Wife be overjoyed at the Birth of a Son and Heir, beyond all their Expectations? And how could *Abraham* indure to cut off all their Joy and Comfort in ſuch a Son, at one Stroke, with his bloody Knife? *Laſtly*, which was more than all this, *Iſaac* was the Son of the Promiſe, given by a Kind of Miracle, and a ſpecial Token of *God*'s Favour; and how ſhould it not go againſt his Heart, to part with ſuch a ſignal Bleſſing and Token of *God*'s Love? And it was promiſed that his *Seed* ſhould be as the *Stars of Heaven*, and *that all Nations ſhould be bleſſed in it*; and how could this be made good, if *Iſaac* muſt be ſacrificed? *God* had given him no new Promiſe of another Son, in whoſe Seed he would make this good. And how ſhould *Abraham* hope ever to ſee this Promiſe performed, except he could think a Generation of Men ſhould ſpring up out of his Son's Blood, ſhed upon the Earth? Now behold the Faith of *Abraham* in full Strength and Glory: He diſputeth not with himſelf how theſe Things could be, but being commanded by *God*,

God, readily goeth to do his Commands, leaving the Iſſue to *God*; not doubting but whilſt he did his Part, *God* would do his own. *Obedience* was *Abraham*'s Part and Duty; the *Promiſe* was *God*'s, and *Abraham* troubleth not his Head with it, any more than to believe it; how it would be fulfilled was not his Buſineſs to contrive, let *God* ſee to that. Thus, ſaith the *Apoſtle*, *He that had received the Promiſes, offered up his only Son; accounting that God was able to raiſe him up, even from the Dead.* Heb. xi. 17, and 19. Tho' he had received ſuch Promſes, as now in all human Probability he could ſee no likely Way of fulfilling, yet ſuch Confidence had he in *God*, whoſe Ability to do all Things he well underſtood, that he made no Queſtion of it, but *God* would find a Way to make good his Word, though it ſhould be raiſing up again this ſame Son to Life, whom he had now commanded him to offer up in Sacrifice. *Seeſt thou now*, ſaith St. *James*, *how Faith wrought with his Works, and by Works was Faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled, which ſaith, and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs.* Jam. ii. 22, 23.

§. IV.

§. IV. In this illuſtrious Example of Faith, we may ſee what is it *to come unto Chriſt*, and to *believe* in him. Do we ſtedfaſtly believe that *Jeſus* is that *Meſſiah*, the *Son of the living God*, that was promiſed to come into the World to be the Saviour of Sinners? Do we believe that he hath done and ſuffered all that was required of him as our *Redeemer*, and the *Mediator* of the *new Covenant* of *Grace*, and that *God* hath accepted of his Sacrifice for us, and hath made him *Head over all Things to his Church*, and put all Things into his Hand, and hath made him our *King* and *Governor*, and that in his *Goſpel* he hath declared unto us the Tenure and Contents of this *Covenant*, and all the Terms on which we may be ſaved? And do we believe that all God's Promiſes in him are *Yea* and *Amen*, ſure and irrevocable, and ſhall be made good to a Tittle? Doth the Belief of theſe Things work in us true thankfulneſs for this unſpeakable Mercy, and inflame our Hearts with great Love to the Author of all this Goodneſs, and by this Love, work in us an hearty Willingneſs, and deſire to obey him, and pleaſe him in all Things? And to this End do

we engage ourſelves ſeriouſly in this holy *Covenant?* Do we ſtumble at no Difficulties or frightful Appearances in our Way, but whatſoever at preſent we may ſeem to loſe by it, or how hardly ſoever we think we muſt come by the Things that *God* hath promiſed, yet we betake ourſelves to *Chriſt*, as our only *Saviour* from Death, and Inſtructor in the Way of Life, and Protector againſt all Enemies, and Conductor to eternal Glory, in a reſolute and chearful Obſervance of his Rules, and conſtant keeping *Covenant* with him, even in the ſevereſt Branches of it. When *Chriſt* in his *Goſpel* calleth us to himſelf, telling us he is willing to be our Saviour, and to give us his *Holy Spirit* to be our Sactifier, and will bring us to his *Father* as our eternal Happineſs, do we verily believe all this ſo aſſuredly, that we dare venture our Life and Salvation upon it, and truſt him with all our Concerns, not doubting of his Fidelity? And when he goeth farther, to tell us, that if we will have theſe Benefits of a *Saviour*, we muſt *repent* of all our Sins, and change both our *Hearts* and *Lives*; and be ready, if need be, to *leave Father and Mother, and all Relations, Houſes and Lands*, and all worldly Profits and

and Advantages; *to deny ourſelves*, and not regard our own carnal Wills nor Deſires, our Safety, Eaſe, Honour or *Life* itſelf, but be very chearfully willing *to take up the Croſs* and bear it after him, ſuffering any Loſs, Shame, Pain or Death for his Sake: If when we hear all this, we ſtagger not through Unbelief, but our firm Belief of his Promiſes, and Senſe of our Obligations to him, reſolvedly make us ſet light by all theſe Things: If we make no Queſtion, but he will be full as good as he hath ſaid; and, in Confidence of his Faithfulneſs, deliberately enter into his *Covenant*, purpoſing and endeavouring unfeignedly to keep it, then do we truly *come unto Chriſt*, and *believe* in *Chriſt*. We believe that he by his bloody Death hath attoned our Sins, and we truſt to *God*'s Mercy, through that Sacrifice only, for our Pardon. We believe that he hath taught us the good Will of his *Father*, and the only Way to Life, and we apply ourſelves with all earneſt Care and Diligence to learn it and to do it. We believe him to be our *King*, *Lord* and *Governor*, and we give ourſelves to learn his Laws, to obey them, to fight his Battles, to do the Work he puts us to, and to be con-

tent with the Condition he placeth us in, with all Patience expecting and waiting for the Accompliſhing of his Promiſes in his own Time. And this is to believe unto Salvation. And *juſtifying Faith is an hearty Compliance with the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, truſting our Souls in his Hand.* He that thus *cometh to Chriſt* ſhall find *Reſt.*

CHAP. VI.

SECT. I.

BUT *no Man will thus come unto Chriſt, but he that is truly ſenſible of the Weight of Sin, and heartily deſirous to be eaſed of it.* Without this *Senſe* and *Deſire*, there cannot be in us a *Willingneſs* to come, and without theſe we cannot hope for a *Welcome* with *Chriſt*. The Call or Invitation is to all that are *laden* with Sin, as hath been ſhew'd; but what can make this Invitation ſo prevalent with us, as to embrace it, if we find in ourſelves no Want or Need of that to which we are invited? Or how can we imagine *Chriſt* ſhould bid them welcome, who love their Sins better than that which he inviteth them unto, and have no Deſire to part with them? *Chriſt* calls unto thoſe that *labour, and are heaven laden.* Which Words are to be underſtood by the Help of a *Figure* often uſed in *Scripture*, and are to be conſtrued to this Purpoſe: Ye that *labour of being heavy laden*, or are ſick and weary

of your Burden ; you that feel the Load heavy, and ſo heavy, that you are loath to carry it any longer ; but are willing to hearken to any Way, whereby you may be freed from it, not at eaſe in your Mind, till you be delivered from its Slavery. If it be not thus with us, we ſhall be loath to be at much Pains to be rid of it, and will not much thank him, or own any great Obligation laid upon us by him, that ſhall take it off. Suppoſe that the ableſt *Phyſician* in the World ſhould come, and be altogether as charitable as he is ſkilful ; and ſhall, in Charity to the Sick, ſend forth his Servant to give Notice of his coming, together with a kind Invitation to all the Sick of any Diſeaſe, to come to his Lodging, and he will Cure them freely, and aſk nothing for his Pains. All the Sick, you hear, are freely invited, he excepteth not any of them, though it ſhould be the *Plague* or fouleſt Diſeaſe in the World they are ſick of. And all that he requireth of them is to come and accept of his Kindneſs. Now, though ſome others will, it may be, come, out of a curious Deſire they have to ſee this famous Man, or to talk and diſpute with him, or that they may have ſomething

to

to talk of; and though they may talk much and very well of him to one another, yet they only will come unto him for his Help, who ſuppoſe themſelves ſick, and have a great Deſire to be well. Others will not loſe the Benefit of their worldly Labours, no, nor the Pleaſure of their Recreations, much leſs will they be at the Trouble to follow his Directions, to faſt and abſtain from ſuch pleaſant Meats and Drinks as they love, or to take the bitter Pills and Potions he giveth, or to ſuffer thoſe Cuttings and Scarifyings, and other painful Means, he ordereth. There muſt be then in all that come to Chriſt theſe two Things. 1. *A Senſe of their Sins, and of the Evil of them.* 2. *A Deſire to be delivered from them.*

1. There muſt be in us a true and deep Senſe of our Sinfulneſs and ſad Condition, wherein we are, by Reaſon of it. For why ſhould we ſeek after *a Saviour*, if we be not ſenſible that we need one? That we are all *laden*, and how *heavy* our Load is, we have ſeen before. *If we ſay that we have no Sin, we deceive ourſelves, and the Truth is not in us. If we confeſs our Sins, he is faithful, and juſt to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanſe us from all Unrighteouſneſs.* 1 John i. 8, 9.

No Man will trouble himſelf to ſue for a Pardon, that taketh himſelf to be no Offender. However, I ſuppoſe, there be but a very few who are ſo wholly deluded and blinded by *Satan*, as to think themſeves altogether without Sin; yet, it is to be feared, there be very many ſo hardned by Sin, as not to be thoroughly ſenſible either of the Weight or Number of their Sins. Many there be who will not by any Arguments be perſwaded to eſteem thoſe Things in themſelves to be Sins, or not to think them Virtues, Ornaments, and rare Embelliſhments, which are indeed very great and foul Sins: Many again that ſee them as Sins, yet are apt to count them but tolerable Infirmities, light Blemiſhes, and, as they call them, *Venial* Sins, ſuch as ſhall be pardon'd of Courſe, without any Endeavour of Amendment, which are indeed very grievous and deadly Sins. Moſt of us are too apt to overlook, and ſet light by the *original Corruption* of our Nature, which, if it muſt not be quite removed in this Life, yet muſt be much corrected, abated, and reſiſted, or it will deſtroy us: We are not commonly ſo obſervant of our ſecret *Averſions* from *God* and *Goodneſs*, or of our inward *Inclinations*

clinations to Evil as we ſhould be. Men are prone to think they have but little Weight upon their Souls, ſo long as they can abſtain from thoſe groſſer *Acts* of Wickedneſs, which common Honeſty is aſhamed of. Omiſſions of Duty, Neglect of doing all the Good we can, and improving our Talents by Uſe, and Imperfections of Heart, and Coldneſs of Affections, and ſuch like, are but little minded by the moſt. If this were not ſo, we ſhould not daily ſee ſo great a Multitude of all Sorts of Sinners go ſinging along the broad Way that leadeth to Deſtruction, with ſo much Pleaſure and Lightſomneſs, when it is moſt plain to all thoſe who have their Eyes to ſee them, and the Ways they walk in, that they go laden with Sin all the Day long, and without taking any Notice of it, or labouring by Repentance and Prayer to eaſe themſelves of it, can go to ſleep in their Beds at Night, lying down with the ſame heavy Load upon them. It would certainly marr their Mirth, and diſturb their Reſt, and baniſh Sleep from their Eyes, or fill their Heads with frightful Dreams, were their Caſe but half ſo well known to themſelves, as it is viſible to others. If therefore we would have

true Reſt, we muſt preſs Home the heavy Weight which we have already ſeen to be in Sin, upon our Conſciencies, by conſidering it, together with all its Aggravations, even till we perceive it to become intolerable to us. We muſt ſtudy the Law that forbiddeth and diſcovereth our Sins, and we muſt conſider the Curſes which are therein denounced againſt Sinners, and on theſe Things muſt we meditate even till they break our Hearts! *a broken and a contrite Heart being a Sacrifice which God will not deſpiſe.* Pſal. l. 17. We muſt ſearch our Hearts to the very Quick, even till they become ſore and very tender, and feel the Smart of Sin, and are not able to endure it any longer. Till we feel the Sting of the fiery Serpent, wherewith we are bitten, we will not be careful to look up to what was typified by that *brazen Serpent* in the Wilderneſs, *Jeſus Chriſt*, lifted up upon the *Croſs* for our healing. We muſt be very ſenſible both of the *Guilt* and of the *Pollution* of Sin before mentioned.

§. II. 1. We muſt labour to be very ſenſible of our *Guilt*, as we are heinous Offenders, Breakers of the righteous Law of *God*, and obnoxious to eternal Damnation.

nation; how that by no Means we can eſcape *God*'s Wrath, without the Reconciliation wrought by *Jeſus Chriſt*. The Bond muſt be cancelled with his Blood, or the Debt muſt be paid to the utmoſt Farthing. We ſhould ſtrive all we can to feel the Dreadfulneſs of that which is like to come upon us, and be our Portion for ever, *everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord.* 2 Theſ. i. 9. *Everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, Matt. xxv. 41. O dreadful Words! Had we but a right Underſtanding of them, and were the full Import of them duly imprinted on our Hearts, by a ſerious Conſideration of the Evils they ſignify! this we muſt endeavour for, even till we find the Thoughts hereof quite to ſink all our vain Confidence, and to bring us to deſpair in ourſelves, or of Safety any other Way than by *Chriſt*. Till we conclude that if we be left by *God* to ſtand upon our own Legs, without a *Saviour* to reſt our Hearts upon, our Burden muſt needs be altogether inſupportable, and we muſt fall and periſh irrecoverably.

2. But then we muſt alſo labour to come to a true Sight and Senſe of the *Foulneſs* of our Sins, as they are the Defacing

facing of *God's Image*, the Shame and Diſgrace of our human Nature, the only Things that could turn *Angels* into *Devils*, and *Men* into *Beaſts*, as contrary to the pure Nature of God, and all that is honeſt and laudable, as Darkneſs is to Light. Conſider how many Waſhings and Purifications were of old appointed to remind Men of this Pollution, and let the *Font* wherein we were *baptized* be a continual Remembrancer to us of the ſame. Let us remember that all the Promiſes of *God* ſhould move us *to cleanſe ourſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit, and to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of the Lord.* 2 Cor. vii. 1. *Sin* and *Uncleanneſs* are one Thing in the Language of the *Scripture*, as *Zech.* xiii. 1. and elſewhere. Hereby are we loathſome and abominable to the *Holy God*, and therefore muſt learn to abhor ourſelves in Duſt and Aſhes, as moſt vile and unclean Things, *loathing ourſelves in our own Sight for our Iniquities, and for our Abominations, aſhamed and confounded for our own Ways.* Ezek. xxxvi. 31, 32. Thus are we to conſider the Foulneſs of our Load, that we may be throughly humbled and abaſed in our own Thoughts. And,

§. III.

§. III. 2. That we may be indeed *weary* of our ſinful ſelves, as we are now a Burden to ourſelves. That we may find no Quiet in our Souls, till we find out a Way *to put off the old Man.* Can any Man be willing to be preſt to Death, though the Weight that lieth upon him were in itſelf never ſo precious? But is it poſſible a Man ſhould be willing to be choak'd in a Dung-hill or a Jake? Can a Man chuſe but be weary of that which he feeleth both painful, ſhameful, and deſtructive? Many are willing to go groaning under very heavy and galling Burdens, to get ſome Profit, though it amount but to a poor Livelihood; but would theſe Men carry ſuch Loads for nothing, but merely to lame or kill themſelves? And is not the Load we now ſpeak of ſuch an unprofitable and deadly Load? *What Fruit (ſaith the Apoſtle) had ye then in thoſe Things whereof ye are now aſhamed? The End of thoſe Things is Death.* Rom. vi. 21. Shall not any Man in his Wits be heartily deſirous to part with ſuch a Load? It is the *Devil* our Enemy that holds us in this Slavery. It is an Honour to be coveted to be the *Devil*'s Porter or Pack-horſe? It is Sin and

and Corruption we are laden with, and is it a desirable Employment to carry Dirt and Nastiness, to be ranked among the Dung-carts? Strange it is to see the Haughtiness and monstrous Pride of ambitious Spirits stoop so contentedly to such a vile Drudgery! A Gentleman or Woman would take it very disdainfully if a Ragman or Oyster-woman should desire their Help in carrying their Loads for them awhile; to ease themselves, and yet think it no Disparagement to their Birth or Quality, to carry with them to their Graves all that Load of Corruption they derive from *Adam*, and a thousand Times more Filth, that they daily lay upon themselves. Many that would take it very grievously, and storm exceedingly, to be desired by their Cooks to assist them in dressing their own Dinners, are yet all the Year long ready at the Command or Intreaty of the *Devil*, to *make Provision for their Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof:* As if they counted it their Honour to carry any the vilest Load, to drudge in any of the servilest Work, so they can but avoid *Christ's easy Yoke and light Burden.* Shall Christ now so cheaply rate his own Bounty and Goodness, as not only to beg us to accept of it, but also to force it

upon

upon thoſe that in their, greateſt Need, have no Deſire of it, but ſcorn and deſpiſe it? Shall he violently pull and tear off the Load of Sin from them who have ſo ill a Will to part with it, that they hold hard and ſtruggle with all their wicked Strength to keep it? Is it to be expected he ſhould ſtrip Men againſt their Will, and force them in at the *ſtrait Gate* to Happineſs? Indeed he is graciouſly pleaſed, of his infinite Love, to uſe even much of this Violence to bring Men to a Deſire to part with what is hurtful to them. He loads them with Affections to make them hate their Load of Sins, he fruſtrates their vain Hopes, diſappoints them in their wicked Projects, lets them be ſpoiled and robbed of Things they love, to ſhew them the Inconſtancy of their worldly Comforts; caſteth them on their ſick Beds, to ſhew them the Uſeleſneſs of earthly Things in their greateſt Need of Help and Comfort. Thus *he hedgeth their Way with Thorns*. Hoſ. ii. 6. Bringeth them into very great Difficulties and Straits, unconquerable by their own Wit and Strength, and all is to bring them to this Deſire of Eaſe by him; as *Elihu* ſpeaks, *If they be bound in Fetters, and holden in Cords*

of

of Affliction: This is ſuch a Mercy as is uſed towards Madmen, to tame and bring them to their Wits; it is *to ſhew them their Work and their Tranſgreſſion that they have exceeded: To open their Ears to Diſcipline, and* warn them *that they return from Iniquity; that they may obey and ſerve him, and ſpend their Days in Proſperity, and their Years in Pleaſure.* Job xxxvi. 8, 9, *&c.* But if after all this, Men will love their Sin, which *God* hates, and will not be brought to a hearty Deſire to part with it, they muſt take what it will bring upon them in the End. It is indeed a very Contradiction to ſay a Man can be happy in Heaven, and not deſire to be eaſed of Sin. The Happineſs of Heaven conſiſteth much in a Freedom from all Sin, and a rejoicing in this Freedom, this is the *Reſt Chriſt* promiſeth; and ſhall that Man rejoice in his Freedom from Sin, that had no Deſire to part with it? Can a Man rejoice and think himſelf happy in a Freedom which he hath no Love for? Neither muſt this Deſire to be eaſed of our Load, be only a Deſire to be freed from the Pain it puts us to, but from the Load itſelf; for otherwiſe it would be only a Deſire to carry it with Eaſe and Pleaſure,

Pleaſure, ſuch as all wicked Men have. As a covetous Man, that carrieth on his Shoulders a great Weight of Gold, is weary of the Weight, but not of the Gold; he can wiſh it lighter, but he cannot wiſh it leſs. As a drunken Man the next Day is weary of his Qualms and Headach, but he is not weary of exceſſive drinking; he is weary of the Pain, but not of the Sin; he could wiſh it were more wholeſome, and leſs ſhameful, and leſs coſtly, but he would not be abridged of it. A Thief hath a Deſire not to be found out, nor diſgraced, and moſt of all not to be hanged; but he hath no Deſire to be honeſt. Such a Deſire is not accepted by *Chriſt*, nor is there any Reaſon it ſhould; for it is no Deſire to be free from what he hateth, but only from what we hate or fear, and we could well be content to carry that about us ſtill, which is odious and diſhonourable to him, ſo we might be freed of what is painful to us. In Effect, it is to wiſh that *Chriſt* would love Sin as well as we do, or at leaſt, that he would give us Leave to diſhonour him by it, and not puniſh us for it. In ſhort, we muſt chiefly deſire to be eaſed of Sin, as it is odious and diſhonourable to *God*, and out of that filial Reſpect we owe to him,

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more than out of Love to ourſelves, though it is to the greateſt and trueſt Love we can have for ourſelves, who can only be happy in honouring and enjoying *God*. When therefore we are weary and ſick of Sin, becauſe it makes us unable to honour *God* as we ought, and ſo bends us downward, that we cannot raiſe up ourſelves to delight in him, then are we weary of it indeed. When the Senſe of our Vileneſs by Sin hath begotten us low Thoughts of ourſelves, and hath ſo ſufficiently depreſſed us as to lay us in the Duſt, in a true and ſeaſonable Humiliation of Heart; when it hath quite ſunk us in our own Eſteem, ſo that we account ourſelves unworthy of the leaſt of *God*'s Mercies; and are ſo weary of continuing in ſuch a State, that we *hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs*, then will we be willing to come and lay ourſelves at *Chriſt*'s Feet, that he may take off our Load, and raiſe us up again.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

OUR laſt Point is this. *All that thus come unto Chriſt, heartily deſirous to be eaſed of their Sins, ſhall have Reſt. I*, ſaith Chriſt, *will give you Reſt.* This is it, that a heavy laden and weary Soul ſhould even naturally deſire; and this is it, that ſuch a Soul coming unto *Chriſt* ſhall aſſuredly receive. The Mercy is ſuitable to its Condition, and it is as ſure for its Comfort. *Chriſt* hath it in Store for us, it is not to ſeek or purchaſe; and he is as willing to beſtow it, he will freely *give* it; we need not take any Care to provide wherewith to buy it. His Power is infinite, he is *very God of very God*, all Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto him, *The Father hath put all Things into his Hands.* John. iii. 35. His *Goodneſs* is alſo infinite, 'tis the Goodneſs of *God*, as he cannot be deceived by us, ſo neither can he deceive us; it is againſt his Nature, as he is the *God* of *Truth*, to deal falſely. He is faithful, and cannot lie. *He is able to ſave all them to the utmoſt*

moſt that come unto God by him. Heb. vii. 25. And his Word is given us, *thoſe that come unto him he will not caſt out.* John. vi. 37. That therefore which he hath promiſed is moſt ſure. For he hath ſealed his Promiſe with his Blood. And what is it that he hath promiſed but Reſt? Even a threefold Reſt. 1. *From the Guilt and Puniſhment of Sin.* 2. *From the Power and Dominion of Sin.* And, 3. *From the Working and Being of Sin.*

1. *Chriſt* will give unto all that thus come unto him a *Reſt from the Guilt, Puniſhment, or Condemnation of Sin*; and this is that which is called *Juſtification. There is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the Fleſh but after the* Spirit. Rom. viii. 1. *Who ſhall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God hath juſtifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather, that is riſen again, who is even at the right Hand of God, who alſo maketh Interceſſion for us.* Ver. 33, 34. All our Sins that ever we have committed, when we come unto *Chriſt*, by a true and a living *Faith*, ſuch as hath been already deſcribed, ſhall

ſhall be freely forgiven us, and we ſhall ſtand acquitted of them all before *God*. *He*, ſaith Chriſt, *that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that ſent me, hath everlaſting Life, and ſhall not come into Condemnation, but is paſſed from Death unto Life.* John v. 24. Our coming unto *Chriſt* is our paſſing over from a State of *Death* and *Condemnation*, into a State of *Life* and *Salvation*.

2. *Chriſt* will give all ſuch as come unto him, a *Reſt from the Power and Dominion of Sin*. Sin is in ſome Meaſure in the beſt; and wherever it is, it will work; but in thoſe that are come to *Chriſt*, it is but like the Working of a Diſeaſe, that is in a good Meaſure cured; a Man feels it to his Trouble, but he is brought to that Degree of Health, that it prevaileth not to caſt him down; he can go about the Works of his Calling, though not with that Vigor and Activity as he might do, were he perfectly well. The *Dominion* of Sin, whereby it had us in Subjection, and had Command of our Will, ſo that we were willingly led by it, and took Pleaſure in it, is broken, and we are able to reſiſt it, and ſubdue it in its Motions? *Our old Man is crucified with Chriſt, that the*

the Body of Sin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve Sin. Rom. vi. 6. *Sin ſhall not have Dominion over you.* Ver. 14. We need *not let Sin reign in our mortal Bodies, that we ſhould obey it in the Luſts thereof,* Ver. 12. *But being made free from Sin, we become Servants unto God, having our Fruit unto Holineſs, and the End everlaſting Life.* Ver. 22. This is our *Sanctification.*

3. *Chriſt* will give all that come unto him a *final Reſt from Sin in all Reſpects,* ſo that it ſhall be quite done away, and ſhall be no more at all, to create us any more Trouble of any Kind whatſoever. This ſhall be in our *Glorification,* when we come into thoſe heavenly *Manſions* which our *Lord* is gone before, to prepare for us; *John* xiv. 2. when he ſhall come to take us to himſelf, that where he is, there we may be alſo. *John.* xiv. 3. Then ſhall there be no Sin at all, no Temptation to Sin, no Inclination to Sin, none of all thoſe numerous Evils which now, by Reaſon of Sin, we groan under. *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from our Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Death, neither Sorrow nor Crying, neither ſhall there be any more Pain, for the former Things are paſſed away.* Rev. xxi. 4. Then ſhall

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there be a perfect and endless *Sabbath* of Rest and Joy in the glorious Presence of *God*, when *Christ* shall say, *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter ye into the Joy of your Lord.* Matt. xxv. 21. and, *Come, ye blessed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*

Thus far have we seen the Doctrine of the Text, as it serveth to inform our Understanding in Matter, both of Faith and Practice. And these Things, very necessary to be distinctly known, and firmly believed, have we learned from it. That Sin is a very grievous Burden: *God* hates it, the World groans under it, we are both defiled and plagued by it, and for it. All Mankind is laden with it, corrupted by it, and suffer many sad and heavy Evils because of it. *Jesus Christ* alone can ease us of it; he alone, by his bloody Death, hath procured our Pardon; he alone, by his holy Example and Gospel, hath shew'd the Way to Heaven; he alone by his *Holy Spirit*, can cleanse us, and fit us for the Presence of *God*. All Men, not one excepted, are by *Christ* freely invited to himself, as he is the *Way, the Truth, and the Life*; nothing lieth in our Way that can necessarily

rily hinder us, nothing can be thought on that ought to diſcourage us. All that would have Eaſe by him, muſt take the Pains to come unto him, and by a living Faith working by Love, muſt yield themſelves intirely to him, reſolvedly join, and conſtantly abide in Covenant with him. In order hereunto, they muſt be made ſenſible, both of their Danger and their Vileneſs, count their Sins a Burden, and earneſtly deſire to be delivered from them. Laſtly, all that are ſo, may come with Comfort and Confidence, they ſhall have Reſt, be juſtified and acquitted from the Puniſhment of Sin, be ſanctified more and more, and reſcued from the Dominion of Sin, and finally glorified, and placed beyond the Reach of Sin in eternal Happineſs.

PART II.

PART II.

IF we rightly understand and firmly believe what we have been told in the *former* Part of this Discourse, it will not sure be needful to use many Arguments in this *second* Part, to persuade us to accept of *Christ*'s so gracious Invitation. Can it seem any hard Task to persuade a sick Person to accept of Health, a labouring and laden Person to accept of Rest? And yet see the Hardness of our Hearts, and what strange unnatural Things Sin hath made us; that we can hardly find in our Hearts to hearken to any Thing that will do us good, so that we seem even bereft of that common Principle of *Self-preservation*. After we have heard all this again and again, though our merciful *Jesus*, in tendrest Compassion to our dying Souls, doth never cease, but by his Servants sent forth to this Purpose, daily reneweth this Invitation to us, yet the greatest Number

by far even of thoſe who make a Profeſſion of following him, are ſtill but where they were, or rather farther from him, and their own Reſt in him, than at firſt; laden ſtill as much or more than ever; and what is worſt and ſaddeſt of all, ſeem not able to endure ſo much as to hear of Eaſe. This Load of Sin hath preſſed moſt of us down into a flat Stupidity, and we have borne it ſo long that we feel it not; it hath made us all over brawny and void of Senſe, our Hearts are even turn'd to Sone, and capable of no Impreſſion. How many amongſt us from Day to Day, as ſo many wretched Pack-horſes, driven by the Devil and his Servants, go trotting on in the wide Road to Hell, as contentedly, and with as much Satisfaction, as if it were the only good Service we could do ourſelves; and ſo long as he allures us on with a Bell and a Feather, and we can have but a little Straw and Provender at Night, we forget both the Load that we carry, and the ſad End of our Journey, and ſeem as proud of this Slavery, as if it were the very Height of Honour and Dignity our Natures are capable of. Our very Bonds and Fetters, be they never ſo hard and heavy, we are too

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apt to account our richeſt Ornaments, greateſt Bravery, and the nobleſt Badges of Honour; the very Huſks and Swines Meat wherewith we are fed, the moſt princely Fare and royal Dainties; yea, and thoſe filthy and ſtinking Puddles and Mire we are driven through, far more ſweet and pleaſant than the Garden of *Eden*; and, in a Word, our moſt abject Slavery the moſt perfect Freedom. It were well, if many of thoſe that profeſs *Chriſtianity* in Word, and ſome other thin little Formalities of Duty, did not yet in their Hearts account their moſt merciful *Jeſus* the cruelleſt Tyrant that ever appeared to torment the World, eſteeming his eaſy Yoke the moſt galling, and his light Burden the moſt heavy and grievous that ever were borne; his Commandments the greateſt Grievances, and his Goſpel, which hath brought *Life and Immortality to Light*, the very worſt Tidings that ever were brought unto Men; and all this, becauſe hereby War is proclaimed againſt their beloved Murderers, their darling Luſts. Why elſe ſhould Men be ſo angry to be told of the Load they carry; account them their Enemies that perſwade them to lay it down; neglect ſo great Salvation,

even when they hear there is no eſcaping for them that do ſo. Why do they tread under Foot the Son of God in their whole Courſe of walking, and ſet no more by the Blood of the Covenant, than as if it were ſome unholy or common Thing? Why ſhould they do ſuch daily Deſpight unto the Spirit of God, and turn his Grace into Wantonneſs, and deſpiſe the Goodneſs and long-ſuffering of God, which ſhould lead them to Repentance? Are they not ſufficiently told that they add hereby daily to their heavy Load, and *heap up unto themſelves Wrath againſt the Day of Wrath and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God.* Rom. ii. 5. *Chriſt came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.* Luke xix. 10. And they induſtriouſly keep out of the Way, chuſing to be any-where rather than near his Houſe, or where he is in the Midſt of two or three gathered together in his Name. As if no Loſs could ever befall them, like unto that of being ſaved from their Sins; it ſeems to be their greateſt Study and laborious Contrivance, how they may loſe themſelves daily more and more in Sin; and even run into a Wilderneſs of Sins, to render their finding and ſaving almoſt impoſſible. He offereth them

them freely Milk to nouriſh them, Wine to chear them, himſelf, the *living Bread that came down from Heaven*, to ſtrengthen them; *John* vi. *his Spirit to be in them, a Well of living Water, ſpringing up unto eternal Life.* John iv. 14. They are deaf to all this, they will ſpend their Money for that which is not Bread, and their Strength for that which ſatisfieth not. They are reſolved to labour for the Wind, and will go hew out for themſelves Ciſterns, even broken Ciſterns, that can hold no Water. O, if we have any Senſe left in us of either Happineſs or Miſery, if the *Devil* and *Sin* have not ſo quite unmanned us, that we are not able to diſtinguiſh between Light and Darkneſs, ſweet and bitter, Good and Evil, Life and Death, Heaven and Hell, Salvation and Damnation, *God* and the *Devil*, let us yet attend to this Voice of Mercy, theſe Breathings of Love in the Text. 1. *Be perſuaded*, 2. *Be directed* by this Invitation, how to do good to your Souls.

CHAP. I.

SECT. I.

LET us be *perſuaded*, as many of us as are weary and heavy-laden, to come unto *Chriſt*. Are we not all ſo? Heavy-laden, I am ſure, we are; how weary, I know not. What would we have more to encourage us? Can we deſire more than Reſt? Can we have it cheaper than by Gift? Can we have better Aſſurance than *Chriſt*'s Promiſe? Can it be worth any Thing, if not worth coming for? Can we expect more than a free Invitation? Salvation is prepared and made ready for us all, we are all of us moſt freely invited to it, invited by the great *King* of Heaven and Earth, not ſo much as one of us, how vile ſo ever we are or have been, excepted; and will we not be thankful for all this, and *come?* O abominable Ingratitude! or rather Senſeleſsneſs, and truly lamentable above all Things! What! ſo many heavy-laden Perſons amongſt us, laden with Sinfulneſs from the very Womb, heavier

heavier laden by the numerous Sins which we have been daily adding ever ſince we could do any Thing, and many ways laden for Sin, with very grievous Evils, heavy to be borne, and ſuch as there is not one amongſt us all, but would gladly be eaſed of at any Rate, but that one of parting with thoſe Sins which brought them all upon us: That we ſhould hear this Invitation again and again preached unto us, and it ſhould continually lie open in our Bibles before our Eyes, and *Chriſt* ſhould wait with much Patience from Day to Day; and yet that we ſhould neither have Ears to hear, nor Eyes to ſee, nor Hearts to embrace it; that we ſhould either not have heard it, or ever have heard it as a Matter of no Concernment at all, or of ſmall Concernment unto us; or that we ſhould be ſo backward and unwilling to accept of it, as if we were invited to ſome *Pariſian Marriage*, to be ſealed with our Blood, or ſuſpect it to be ſome Snare laid, only to intrap us! This would be a Wonder even above all Wonders, had not Sin ſo viſibly prevailed over Men, that it hath left no Room for Wonder at any Thing that is wicked, and hath made it the only Wonder

that *God* ſhould yet continue to offer us Mercy. How can it be, that inſtead of coming, Men ſhould be always going ſome other Way, hunting about and beating every Buſh for Shifts and vain Excuſes, whereby they may ſhuffle it off, and keep themſelves miſerable for ever? Would it not ſeem a very unreaſonable Thing, and even incredible, that a Man hungry and thirſty, ready to die for Want of a Bit of Bread, or Cup of Water, ſhould yet refuſe a kind Invitation to a plentiful Table? Or that one who hath not, in a very cold Winter, ſo much as one poor Rag to cover his Nakedneſs, and keep his Body from freezing, ſhould yet refuſe a good warm Suit of Apparel, when charitably offered him? How abſurd ſoever this may ſeem to us, and though we can hardly imagine that any one, except a very mad Man, could poſſibly in ſuch a Caſe be guilty of ſo great Self-neglect, yet far more abſurd are too many amongſt us, who take themſelves to be no Fools, but nevertheleſs mad indeed! Such I mean, who are ready to periſh everlaſtingly in their Sins, and yet will not hearken to the Voice of a loving *Saviour*, inviting them freely to everlaſting Life and Glory. As

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it was once ſaid. *Chriſt came unto his own, and his own received him not.* John i. 11. So it may be ſeen among us now, how he daily cometh in his *Word* and *Miniſters* unto us all, wooing and beſeeching laden Sinners to come unto him, and how many of us will not hear? How many of us laugh at his Meſſage? How many ſcorn and deride, and many other Ways abuſe his Servants? May not *God* ſtill ſay, as it is ſaid, *Iſa.* lxv. 2. *I have ſpread my Hands all Day unto a rebellious People?* May not *Chriſt* yet weep and mourn over us, as once he did over *Jeruſalem*, crying out, *How often would I have gathered you, even as a Hen gathereth her Chickens under her Wings, and ye would not!* Matt. xxiii. 37. Hath he not great Reaſon to ſay unto us—*Ye will not come unto me, that ye might have Life.* John v. 40. O! why ſhould we any longer, with the deaf Adder, ſtop our Ears againſt this charming voice of *Love?* Why ſhould we ſo madly arm and fortify our ſelves before-hand, againſt all the gracious Attempts of a loving *Saviour* to win us, againſt all the ſweet Motions of the *Holy Spirit* of Grace to ſanctify us, by fixing in our

Hearts a ſtrong Reſolution to do wickedly; as if we were afraid of nothing more than to loſe the wretched Power and Liberty of deſtroying ourſelves? Why ſhould we thus ſtand upon our Guard againſt *God* and Goodneſs? Why is it, that we are ſo reſolute in holding out, even to the laſt, againſt all the Solicitations of Mercy, againſt all the Beſeechings of God by his Miniſters, againſt all their praying and intreating us in *Chriſt*'s Name to be *reconciled unto God*, to be at Peace with him, to accept of Grace and Pardon, even as ſtifly as if we were defending ſome ſtrong Hold and Fortreſs againſt the *Turk*, or *bloodieſt* of *Tyrants?* We will not be brought by any Condeſcenſions of our offended *God* to yield unto him, upon any the faireſt Terms of Agreement; to any Thoughts of ſurrending our Hearts unto him, ſo long as we can make any Shift to keep the *Fleſh* alive, and make any Proviſion to feed the Luſts thereof. *God hath made a great Supper, and bidden many.* Matt. xxii. But how few of us will come to it? He inviteth us all moſt freely and lovingly, and requireth nothing more of us but to come; he ſends again and again, being unwilling

ling we ſhould loſe his Bounty, to bid us *come*. And yet how few of us regard him? *All Things are ready*, but many of us *ſet light by* all this heavenly Proviſion. *His Oxen and Fatlings are killed*, but many of us value them not at all, but with a Kind of huffing Scorn and Diſdain, turn away from him, as if they ſhould ſay, Tuſh, what care we for all this? We have ſomething elſe of greater Concernments to us to trouble our Heads about. Let thoſe who have no Farms to huſband, no Cattle to feed, no Markets to follow, no Wives and Families to care for, mind ſuch Things as theſe: *That is to ſay*, would Men ſpeak out what they think, and uſe their Tongues to the Language their Hearts are but acquainted with, as ſome have Impudence enough to do, they have more Satisfaction in drudging for this World, than labouring for a better; more Deſire of the Honour they receive one of another, than of that which is of *God* only; of the periſhing Wealth on Earth, than the true Riches in Heaven; they taſte more Sweetneſs in the Pleaſures of the Fleſh, and in the Food of their Luſts, than in the Pleaſures which are at God's Right-hand for evermore, or the

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Meat which endureth unto everlaſting Life. O when will we be aſhamed of being ſo fooliſh for ourſelves? How long ſhall *Satan* and our Luſts within us be allowed thus to ſtand contending againſt *God* and his *Holy Spirit*, yea and our own *Reaſon* too, for the Maſtery, or rather have it yielded up without contending? Whilſt *God* draweth but one Way with the gentle Cords of Love, ſhall theſe be always prevalent againſt him, pulling many Ways with the Cart-ropes of Iniquity and Vanity? Whilſt our bleſſed *Jeſus* is daily calling and inviting us unto Bleſſedneſs, ſhall theſe be allowed to ſtop our Ears with the Dirt of this World? Whilſt he preſenteth us with the moſt delightful Proſpect of Heaven and eternal Glory, ſhall we ſtill patiently ſuffer them to dazzle or blind our Eyes with the Pomps and Vanities of a wicked World? Divine Love and Pity never ceaſeth calling out unto us, and ſaying, *Save yourſelves from this untoward Generation.* Acts ii. 40. *Give Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure.* 2 Pet. i. 10. *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* Phi. ii. 12. *Repent, and be converted, that your Sins*

Sins may be blotted out. Acts iii. 19. And what Answer give we unto all this? May not Christ yet use those Words of us, as truly as ever he did of any other: *The Heart of this People is waxed gross, and their Ears are dull of hearing, and their Eyes have they closed, lest they should see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them.* Acts xxviii. 27. O sad Thought! That *the God of this World should have so blinded the Minds of them that believe, lest the Light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine upon them.* 2 Cor. iv. 4. So little do all the gracious Methods of Love and Peace prevail with most of us; *we still love Darkness better than Light, because our Deeds are evil.*

§. II. But let us now at least consider, if we can consider any Thing, what we shall do in the End of all these Things. Shall any of us be able to dwell with *everlasting Burnings?* And will we not be at the easy Pains to come unto Christ, to prevent them? If we will not, either we must think we are well enough able to endure that *unquenchable Fire*, or else

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we have Hope to eſcape it ſome other Way than by *coming to Chriſt*; or, *laſtly*, we perſuade ourſelves fondly, that there is no ſuch Thing to fear. If we can be ſo vain as to think the Torments of *Hell* tolerable, 'tis only becauſe we underſtand not what *God* hath told us of them. *Our God is a conſuming Fire.* Heb. xii. 29. *It is therefore a terrible Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God.* Heb. x. 31. when *he ſhall deliver us to the Tormentor*, to execute his Wrath and Vengeance upon us to the uttermoſt, in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimſtone, World without End. If we can hope any other Way than by *Chriſt* to eſcape, we have not minded, or do not believe what hath been already ſaid to the contrary. And if we think that there is no *Hell* for Sinners, then muſt we think there is no *God* to be honoured or believed; for it is *he* himſelf hath told us that there is. And if there be no *God*, then are we no *Men*; for without *God* there can be *nothing*. But it is not now our Buſineſs to convince *Atheiſts*, but with the *Apoſtle*, *knowing the Terror of the Lord, to perſuade Men.* 2 Cor. v. 11. As ſure as there is a *God* in Heaven, there is an unquenchable Fire in Hell,

prepared

prepared for the *Devil* and his *Angels*, and ſure to be the Portion of all Sinners that ſide with them, and will not come and ſubmit themſelves unto him who came to deſtroy the Works of the *Devil*. What will Men ſay when they ſee and feel it, and have not the leaſt Hope left them ever to find any Deliverance from it, or Abatement of it? How will they curſe the Day that they neglected the Invitation of a *Saviour*, and the many timely Warnings which they have had to accept of it? Why are we now at Reſt? Why ſtir we not yet towards *Chriſt?* Do we feed ourſelves up with vain Hopes, that we may come Time enough hereafter? What Aſſurance have we of hereafter? Are our Lives granted us for a certain Number of Years, or Days, or Hours? *Jam.* iv. 14. Do any of us know what will be on the Morrow? Are we any ſurer than he was, of whom we read, *Luk.* xii. 20. that our Souls ſhall not this Night be required of us? Say then, where would all our fooliſh Hopes and Confidence be? If we be reſolved to hearken to the Voice of *Chriſt*, inviting us to himſelf, why not now? Is it too ſoon to be at Reſt? Why do we yet harden our Hearts?

Why

Why not now, whilſt it is called To-day, whilſt it is the Day of Salvation? Now we are invited, and we may come; but we know not whether To-morrow we ſhall have either Ears to hear, or Legs to come. Now Reſt is offered; but how ſoon may the Time come, when God will ſwear we ſhall not enter into his Reſt? *Heb.* iv. 3. When Chriſt ſhall peremptorily conclude, that none of thoſe that were bidden ſhall taſte of his Supper. *Luke* xiv. 24. There will be a Time when the Door ſhall be ſhut, and Men ſhall call in vain, *Lord, Lord, open uuto us.* Matt. xxv. 11. but it will not be opened. Let us then, as we love our Souls, and deſire their everlaſting Reſt, take into our moſt ſerious Thoughts what we read in the ſacred Book of God to this Purpoſe.

In the 1ſt. *Chap.* of the *Proverbs*, Ver. 10. we find, that *Wiſdom* (even the eternal *Wiſdom* of the *Father*, become *incarnate* in our *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*) *uttereth her Voice in the Streets. How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love Simplicity, and Scorners delight in ſcorning, and Fools hate Knowledge? Unto you, O Men, I call, and my Voice is to the Sons of Man. O ye Simple, underſtand Wiſdom, and ye Fools, be*

be of an underſtanding Heart. Prov. viii. 4, 5. *Turn you at my Reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words unto you.* Comfortable Words indeed, even ſuch as we read, *Iſa.* lv. 1. *Ho! Every one that thirſteth, come to the Waters; and he that hath no Money, come ye, buy and eat; yea come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price. Wherefore do ye ſpend Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which ſatisfieth not; Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your Soul delight itſelf in Fatneſs. Incline your Ear, and come ye, hear, and your Souls ſhall live, and I will make an everlaſting Covenant with you, even the ſure Mercies of David.* And, Ver. 6. *Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the Wicked forſake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have Mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.*

Now if, after all this, Men are yet reſolved to ſit ſtill, and not be moved at all to conſider, either how miſerable they are, or how happy they may be; if they will, by their unworthy Behaviour,

give

give *Wiſdom* cauſe to complain, as ſhe doth, *Prov.* i. 24. *I have called, and ye refuſed; I have ſtretched my Hand, and no Man regarded; but ye have ſet at nought all my Counſel, and would none of my Reproof:* Let them mind, as they regard their future Welfare, what followeth, and what they ſhall certainly reap in the End, as the ſad Fruit, but juſt Reward, of their Stubbornneſs, *ver.* 26. *I will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh, when your Fear cometh as Deſolation, and your Deſtruction cometh as a Whirl-wind, when Diſtreſs and Anguiſh cometh upon you.* Men think, it may be, that ſuch Things will never come; but how ſecure ſoever now they be, and how little ſoever they break their Sleep with ſuch Thoughts of Miſery before it come; certain it is, as they are Sinners, that once it ſhall come. Let them now cry *Peace, Peace,* as much as they will, to themſelves, yet *There is no Peace, ſaith God, to the Wicked.* Iſa. xlviii. 22. Though they now mightily pleaſe and hug themſelves in the Abundance of their Riches, and Health, and Honour, and carnal Delights, and ſay to their Souls, *Soul, take thine Eaſe, eat, drink, and be merry:* Yet

Yet ſhall they one Day be awakened, and their drowſy Conſciences ſtartled and affrighted, and they, at their Wits End, ſhall not know which Way to turn themſelves. Judgment will be terrible, and they will not dare to abide it; Mercy hath been ſo long deſpiſed, that they will not dare to hope for it. What will they then do? What an Hell ſhall they then find within them? Hear *Wiſdom* again, *Prov.* i. 28. *Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not anſwer; they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me; for that they hated Knowledge, and did not chuſe the Fear of the Lord. Therefore they ſhall eat of the Fruit of their own Way, and ſhall be filled with their own Devices.* By this Time we muſt needs be ſenſible, how greatly it concerns us, to hearken unto the Invitation of *Chriſt*, and to make all the Haſte we can to *come unto him.*

§. III. And yet, it may be feared, there is one great Thing in the Way to very many amongſt us, who are convinced of the Neceſſity of coming to *Chriſt*; which ſtands betwixt Sinners, and all the Exhortation and Perſuaſions

ſions we can uſe to bring them to *Chriſt*; and it is *an haſty and groundleſs Confidence, that they are come to him already*; whence all we ſay to perſuade them ſeemeth of no Concernment to them at all. To *believe* in *Chriſt*, and enter into *Covenant* with him in *Baptiſm*, is to *come* unto him; and this, ſay they, we have already done. We are ſure that we are *baptized*, and we are ſure we do *believe* in *Chriſt*; and therefore, what needs all this ado to perſwade us to *come* to *Chriſt*.

Let all ſuch, as have ſo great a Conceit of themſelves, and ſo ſtrong a Confidence that they are *come* to *Chriſt*, bethink themſelves how they took up this Opinion of themſelves, how it is grounded, and how they can ſatisfy themſelves of the Truth of it. *Baptiſm, without the Anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God, will not ſave them.* 1 Pet. iii. 21. A Profeſſion of Faith, nay, the ſtrongeſt Faith they can have, if it be not that *Faith which worketh by Love*, Gal. v. 6. will do them no Good. If it be not this, let it be a ſtrong Faith, it is a ſtrong Deluſion, and the believing of a Lie. And then, the more confident *Believer*, the worſe *Chriſtian*; the ſtronger the

the *Faith*, the more desperate the Condition; the fewer Doubtings, the less Safety; and nearer *Christ* in Opinion, the farther from him in Reality. Now they of whom we now speak, what *Faith* soever they profess to have, do little else but shew to the World their Vanity in this foolish Confidence. They are wholly Strangers to true *Repentance*, for they have not cast off their Sins: They never entered upon new *Obedience*, for they wilfully break *God*'s Commandments daily, and hate nothing more, than to be told of it. They resist not, but rather seek *Temptations* unto Sin, and so are ordinarily and easily overcome by them. They bear not with Patience *God*'s Chastisements for their Sins. They are not *contented* with that Condition which *God*'s Wisdom hath allotted them. They are not willing to part with all Things, nor with any Thing, so much as a Lust, for *Christ*, and to follow him: But they keep their old Sins, and love them as much as ever; practice not the Duties of Christians, but count them as great a Weariness as ever; they mortify not the Deeds of the Body, but seek out all Ways and Inventions to please and pamper it, and make as great

Provision

Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof, as ever: And yet they would have it thought, that they are already *come to Chriſt*, and are good *Chriſtians*. Let ſuch Perſons truly anſwer this one *Queſtion*, and thereby they will at once confute all their confident Pretences to *Faith* in *Chriſt*. Do they believe the *Goſpel* of *Chriſt* to be true, or do they not? If they ſhall now ſay they do not believe it to be true, then they ſhall confeſs that they have no *Faith* in *Chriſt*, becauſe they believe not his Words. If they ſay they believe it to be true, then they do believe what it telleth them; and by what it telleth them, muſt needs be convinced that they have no *ſaving Faith*. This, I ſay, it telleth them, that Men of ſuch Lives as they live ſhall not be ſaved; it ſaith plainly enough, that they who do not *repent* and forſake their Sins, they that are not *converted*, and made as little Children, are not *born again*, and made *new Creatures*; *deny* not *themſelves*, and are not very willing to leave all for *Chriſt*'s Sake; that take not up his *Croſs*, and follow him; that deny not *Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts*, obey not the Goſpel, but live in *Formication*, *Uncleanneſs*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Revellings*,

lings, and ſuch like, ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Therefore, whatſoever Men pretend, ſo long as they continue ſuch as they are, and do as they do, they have no *ſaving Faith*, nor indeed any Thing of ſound Reaſon, being ſo abſurd as to profeſs that they believe, and hope to be ſaved by believing that, which if they believe, they muſt needs believe that there is no Salvation for ſuch as they.

§. IV. Let us not therefore any longer deceive ourſelves, by pretending to what we have not, but rather awake, and riſe from our ſoft and pleaſing Beds of Security, and come to *Chriſt* for what we want. To move us hereunto, let us conſider, 1. *Ourſelves*. 2. *Our Saviour*. 3. *The Promiſe*. If theſe will not move us, nothing will.

2. Let us conſider *ourſelves*, who are invited unto *Chriſt*, and in ourſelves, theſe three Things are ſeriouſly to be thought upon; 1. *Our Condition*. 2. *Our Danger*. 3. *Our Unworthineſs*.

1. If we conſider well our *Condition* as we are before we come to *Chriſt*, we muſt needs ſee it to be ſuch, as no Man in his right Wits can be proud of, or indeed contented with, it being really as bad

bad as bad can be. Are not all Men weary of a very mean and contemptible Condition, of a moſt troubleſome and miſerable Condition? And hath it not been made abundantly manifeſt to us, that ours is altogether ſuch, before we be truly come to *Chriſt?* The Condition of a Drudge, of a Slave, of a Beggar, can neither be pleaſant nor honourable; and ſuch is our Condition, in the very vileſt Sort, till we come to *Jeſus Chriſt*, and are entered into his Service, the only State of perfect Freedom and true Honour. Shall not we then, whoſe Labours are ſo great, baſe and weariſome; whoſe Diſappointments are ſo many, and Sorrow ſo bitter; ſo many in Number, ſo heavy in Weight; ſhall not we, who are enſlaved in the vileſt Slavery to our own corrupt Luſts, captivated to the cruelleſt of Tyrants, the Prince of Darkneſs, ſtripped quite naked of all Things that may either beautify or defend us, keep us from being either a Shame or a Torment to ourſelves; we, who have loſt all that ever we had, forfeited all that ever was promiſed, blocked up the Way to Happineſs ſo ſtrongly againſt ourſelves, that it is not in the Power of all the World to lay it open again to us; *we*, who are daily languiſhing, decaying, dying,

have

have nothing in ourſelves, can find nothing in any other Creature, which may revive, refreſh, comfort or ſupport us: laſtly, ſhall not *we*, who have as few Friends as Comforts, as many Enemies as Wants and Infirmities; who have made ourſelves odious to *God*, whoſe Love alone can bleſs us; obnoxious to the *Devil*, whoſe Deſign is to deſtroy us, laden ourſelves with ſo much Filth, that we go groaning under it all the Day long, and are ſinking hourly into the Pit of Deſtruction; ſhall not *we* hearken with Joy to this ſo ſeaſonable an Invitation?

2. If we conſider the *Danger* we are daily in, it will be ſure enough to make our Hearts beat, and all our Joints to tremble. What *Danger* can be like that of an impenitent Sinner, who carries his moſt inveterate *Enemy* about with him, whereſoever he goeth, lieth down to ſleep with him every Night, loveth him, and truſteth in him above all others, and counteth him his only true Friend, and worſt of all, is not ſenſible of the ſecret and mortal Wounds he continually giveth him. This *Enemy* is the Sinner *himſelf*, that hates himſelf, fights againſt himſelf, treacherouſly deceiveth himſelf, and will not be perſuaded to

believe it. He daily expoſeth himſelf to the greateſt Evils, daily thruſteth himſelf forward, and draweth nearer and nearer to theſe Evils, and is without any Help or Remedy, any poſſible Way of eſcaping, but this one ſo freely tendered unto him. To loſe our bleſſed *God*, and all that's truly good at once with him; to be ſhut out from his Preſence, and all Happineſs therewith, for evermore; to go into everlaſting Torments, with no better Company than the *Devil* and his *Angels*; to lie with theſe foul Fiends in Flames, as unquenchable as intolerable, without any Hope of Deliverance; to be already under the Sentence of Condemnation, and in continual Fears and Expectation of the ſevereſt Execution; to have no Way open unto Life but one, no Friend in the World that can guide us into it, or carry us through it, but only he that made it. When *Jeſus Chriſt*, who, with the Expence of his own moſt precious *Blood*, hath bought our Pardon, bringeth it to us with his own Hand, and beggeth us to take Pity on ourſelves, and be as willing to accept it, as he to give it: When we are already in the Hands of our Enemy, ſurrounded and

af-

assaulted on all Sides with his bloody Instruments, and no Way to flee but one; no Rescue or Deliverance by any other but by *Jesus* alone; shall we yet stand, in the Midst of all this Danger, disputing with ourselves, whether we had best come to him and live, or stay where we are and die? The longer we stay where we are, the weaker we grow; every Woundlets out much of our Blood and Strength: The more we delay, the nearer we approach to Ruin, the more Difficulties we are daily intangled withall, the harder we find it to come off with Life; and why then should we yet drive off our *Coming* to *Christ*.

3. Consider we lastly in ourselves our great *Unworthiness* of so inestimable a Kindness; and if the Heinousness of the Crime, or the Baseness of the Malefactor, can serve to magnify and commend the Mercy of the *Judge* or *Prince*, certainly the Love of *Christ* will appear marvellous unto us, and worthy of all Acceptance. Let us but think what we are, and what we have done; what God made us, and what we have made ourselves; what God is to us, and how we have behaved ourselves to him. How greatly we have dishonour'd him, and

how highly we have from Day to Day provoked him, what we have deſerved at his Hand, and how patient he is toward us, what Love he offereth us; and we muſt needs account it a Miracle of Goodneſs and Mercy, that there ſhould be yet any Room for us in *God*'s Favour. What? *We*, who are the Children of Traitors and Rebels, the Iſſue of Uncleanneſs, and, as it were, the Vermin now ſpringing of Putrefaction and Rottenneſs, born both Enemies and Bankrupts; *we*, that have been rebellious and treacherous Children from the Womb, and have heaped up Iniquity and Multitudes of moſt abominable Sins to our original Corruption; *we*, that have ſo much and ſo long abuſed all our Parts and Gifts, all God's Bounty and Bleſſings, all his Grace and Patience, all our Time and Opportunities, to his Diſhonour and our own Shame and Reproach; *we* that have ſlighted ſo many Calls, ſtopped our Ears againſt ſo many earneſt Invitations and Intreaties, and vilified and ſet at nought ſo many gracious Promiſes and Incouragements; *we* that have ſo long taken Part with *God*'s Enemies, held out againſt his *Holy Spirit* almoſt as long

as

as we have any Breath left us, and ſet our Luſts in Battle Array againſt *God*, even bidding Defiance to Grace and Salvation. That after all this, we ſhould yet have any Hope given us of a Reconciliation, another Day granted us to conſider of our Peace; that we ſhould not only live, but have ſuch an Invitation renewed unto us. O let us not any longer ſo forget both our *God* and ourſelves, as to add this higheſt Contempt to all the Reſt of thoſe groſs Indignities, which we have already done to the *Lord of Glory*; as now, I ſay, after we know and underſtand, and have been once again put in Mind of all this, to reject this Invitation of our bleſſed *Jeſus*. Let us not grow up to that Height of Madneſs and Folly, to reſolve in very Spite to Love and Mercy, to periſh everlaſtingly. How great a Bravery ſoever this Piece of ſelf-deſtroying Courage may ſeem unto ſome Men now, yet will it certainly fail in the End. However the Evil one poſſeſs them now, and fill them with Ravings and Madneſs, perſuading them to account Profaneneſs Wit, and impudent Wickedneſs the higheſt Gallantry, and one of the fineſt Qualiites of a Gentleman to

laugh at ſober and ſerious Religion, as the Weakneſs of Fools, or the Dotings of Melancholicks, that are apt to fear Shadows, and to be deluded by their own Fanſies, yet will they find this their *Laughter* to be *Madneſs* indeed, when it ſhall turn into *Weeping, and Wailing, and Gnaſhing of Teeth.* Let us therefore well conſider ourſelves, in the firſt Place, and be ſo wiſe as to come unto *Chriſt.*

§. V. 2. Secondly, Let us ſet our Thoughts a while on our *Bleſſed Jeſus*, the good and gracious *God*, that here calleth and inviteth us to himſelf. If we can refuſe an Invitation unto *him*, given us by *himſelf*, it muſt needs be, becauſe we know him not, who he is, what great Things he hath done for us, what bitter Things he hath ſuffered for us, what glorious Things he hath both given us, and laid up in Store for us. It can ſure be nothing but Ignorance of *him*, that can make any of us ſo diſobedient to him, or ſo unthankful for him. *Lord, whither ſhould* we go? ſaid St. *Peter, thou-haſt the Words of eternal Life.* John. vi. 68. Did we know this, or ſtedfaſtly believe it, could all the World

World perſuade us to keep away from *him? He that followeth him ſhall not walk in Darkneſs, but ſhall have the Light of Life.* Joh. viii. 12. Can we believe this, and not follow *him*, though it were unto his *Croſs* and *Grave?* In a Word, he is our *Jeſus*, our *Saviour*, and can we believe him to be ſo, and ourſelves to be loſt Sinners, and not *come* unto him? Well, *all that are given unto him of the Father will come unto him*, John vi. 37. Joh. vi. 45. 65. If we come not, we thereby ſhew plainly what we are, ſuch as the *Father* diſowneth, ſuch as he will not vouchſafe his fatherly Bleſſing unto. Conſider,

1. *Who is Chriſt.* Is he not the *Almighty God, God over all, bleſſed for ever?* Rom. ix. 5. And ſhall not he command us? Muſt we expect an Intreaty from the great and only *Potentate*, the *Lord of Lords*, and *King of Kings*, the Sovereign *Majeſty* of Heaven and Earth? Did not a *Word* of *his* Mouth make us out of nothing, and cannot the leaſt Breath of his Mouth blow us into Duſt? Could not *he* more eaſily have deſtroyed us than redeemed us? Needed *he* have died to damn us, as he did to ſave us? Might *he* not as juſtly

load us, as eaſe us; torment us, as refreſh us? And ſhall we think it becometh us to ſtand parlying with *Omnipotence?* Dare we ſtand ſtill like Stocks when the great *God* calleth us, not move when *he* commandeth us; *He*, I ſay, *in whom we live, and move, and have our Being*. Acts xvii. 28. What a bold and daring Impiety! What a mad Fool-hardineſs is this!

2. Think again, *whither* hath not this *great God* condeſcended to *come* for us, that we, undone Souls, might have this bleſſed Privilege of coming unto *him?* Hath *he* not himſelf vouchſafed to come the far greateſt Part of the Way to meet us, nay, to follow us, to ſeek us, that he might ſave us? *He*, the *Lord of Glory*, the eternal Author of Life and Being, to find out us vile Worms of the Earth, to overtake us in our Sins, and even upon the Brink of Deſtruction, to reſcue us as a Prey ready to be ſwallowed up, even out of the Jaws of the *devouring Lion*; to follow us with the Bowels of Pity and tendereſt Compaſſion, when we were haſtening as faſt as our own Luſt could hurry us, or *Satan* draw us, from *God* and Heaven, to Death and Hell. Came he not from the

the higheſt Throne of heavenly *Glory* and *Majeſty*, to the loweſt Degree of earthly *Humility* and *Abaſement*, that he might exalt us from Slavery to Bleſſedneſs? Did he not vouchſafe to veil for a Time his glorious Deity in our frail Humanity, and *becauſe the Children were Partakers of Fleſh and Blood, himſelf take Part of the ſame*, Heb. ii. 14. to be *made like unto us in all Things*, Sin only excepted, Heb. ii. 17. to *humble himſelf* ſo low for us, as to be *in the Form of a Servant, of no Reputation, obedient to Death, even the Death of the Croſs?* Phil. ii 7. 8. *He who knew no Sin, was he not content to be made Sin for us*, 2 Cor. v 21. *to be made a Curſe for us, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him?* 1 Cor. v. 22. Gal. iii 13. And ſhall we grudge, after all this, to leave our Sins, our Luſts, our Enemies, our Death and Deſtruction, to come unto *him* in the Way of Life for Salvation?

3. Remember, how he hath brought with him his *Father*, our offended *God*, from whom we had wretchedly departed, againſt whom we had wickedly rebelled, to be *reconciled* unto us, to offer us *Pardon* and *Peace*; to be again as *his Father*, ſo *our Father*; as *his God*, ſo *our God*.

John xx. 17. Hath he not brought with him the *Holy Spirit*, whom we have so long grieved and resisted, to be our Instructor and Guide to Life, our Sanctifier and new Principle of Life, our Comforter and Supporter in the Way to Life? *'Tis he that hath brought Life and Immortality to Light through his Gospel.* 2 Tim. i. 10. It is *he* that hath set up his glorious Gospel a bright shining Light, to shew us the Path of Life. It is *he* that hath brought Heaven itself, as it were, to our Doors, and set the Gates thereof wide open for us, freely to enter and be happy. It is his Desire to be always with us, in our Bed chambers, in our Closets, in our very Hearts, to dwell with us and in us, to make us his *Temples*, the living Temples of the living God; to make even every Thing Heaven to us, and us a Heaven to ourselves, whilst we have the gracious and glorious *God* always with us. And will we not come to ourselves again to meet with him?

4. Is not this same merciful *Jesus*, who calleth us thus lovingly to himself, *the Way, the Truth and the Life?* Joh. xiv. 6. Is he not able to entertain us, to bless and crown us with eternal Joys? Is he not willing and ready to embrace all his

his poor returning Prodigals, to feaſt them, to kiſs them with the Kiſſes of his Love, to ſettle them in his *Father*'s Houſe for ever? Hath he not ſufficiently demonſtrated by his bloody Death, his good Will towards us, and by his glorious Reſurrection, his infinite Power to bleſs us?

5. Laſtly, It is *he*, that by his own Example hath marked out the Way before us, and removed out of the Way all the Rubs and Stumbling-blocks that might hinder us, and conquered all our Enemies, that lay in Ambuſh to deſtroy us. He hath bid us *be of good Cheer, becauſe he hath overcome the World*, Joh. xvi. 33. becauſe *he came to deſtroy him that had the Power of Death, the Devil*, Heb. ii. 14. Rom. xvi. 20. becauſe *he will ſhortly tread down all Enemies under our Feet; and Death itſelf ſhall be ſwallow'd up in Victory*. 1 Cor xv. 54. And hath aſſured us, we ſhall be *more than Conquerors through him that loved us*. Rom. viii. 37. Will not now all this Love and Mercy, all this Condeſcenſion and Humility, all this Pains and Preparation, all this Largeneſs and Bounty; will not his coming down to Earth, and going up to Heaven for us, his

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doing Good, and ſuffering Evil, for us; his emptying himſelf, and dignifying our Nature for us, his pacifying *God* and conquering the *Devil* for us; his humble Life and bitter Death for us; will nothing of all this move us to be our own Friends, to endeavour our own Welfare, to hate Vanity and Death, to love Life and Glory? Then are we Stones rather than Men.

§. VI. 3. Let us, *laſtly*, fix our Eyes upon the *Promiſe* which he hath made us, and ſee if that be not enough to win us. *I*, ſaith he, *will give you Reſt. Reſt* he promiſeth, it ſhall be freely *given*, and it ſhall be given by *Chriſt himſelf*.

1. It is *Reſt* which *Chriſt* here promiſeth; and what is that leſs than all Things which we indeed want or can deſire? Would we not all be happy? What is it, but this Deſire of being happy that robbeth us of all Reſt here upon the Earth? Our Heads have no Reſt for contriving it, our Hearts have no Reſt for longing after it, our Bodies have no Reſt for labouring for it, our Friends have no Reſt for our ſoliciting their Help and Advice about it, our Enemies have no Reſt for our Endeavours to remove them out of our Way to it, the

World

World hath no Reſt through our Reſtleſſneſs to attain unto it. We feel our Wants daily of one Kind or other, and this is very uneaſy to us, we cannot reſt till we have them ſupplied: We feel more our Grievances daily, and this is yet more uneaſy to us, and we cannot reſt till we have them redreſſed. We find our Ignorance to be great, and our Weakneſs to be greater. We want and would have; and we know not what; we imagine ſomething that may do us Good, and we drive hard after it, and we cannot overtake it; we find ſomething that we ſought, and we are glad of it, and it proves a very Shadow, and that is not in it which we expected. Thus we give no *Reſt* to ourſelves, by ſeeking out for ſomething that we may *reſt* in; and yet, when the only true and ſure *Reſt* is offered us, we will not accept it. We hear our bleſſed *Jeſus* inviting us to all that we would have, a comfortable and everlaſting Repoſe and Reſting-place, for our troubled Souls, ſuch as in the Midſt of all Wants and Vexations, in the very Heat of Troubles and Perſecutions, though we ſhould be upon the Rack or in the Flame, will never fail us; but we may ſleep and reſt ſecure

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in the Arms of a *Saviour*; a peaceable State of Soul, a ſweet Calm and Tranquility of Mind and Conſcience; of *Conſcience*, I ſay, which ſo often, like the troubled Sea, will not be quiet, but reſtleſsly worketh in itſelf, and caſteth forth Foam and Dirt, damping and ſtifling all our Joys and Comforts; which, when all Things elſe are quiet round about us, and create us no Kind of Troubles, is yet an Enemy in our Breaſts, giving us many ſecret Blows, ſetting Fire on the Houſe within, frighting out all Delights, and conſuming all our Hopes. O what a calm and pleaſant Serenity, what a reviving in ourſelves, and Lightſomneſs of Heart, might we have, would we come to *Chriſt?* Yea, and when all theſe working Days on Earth ſhall have an End, with how great Satisfaction might we leave theſe mortal Bodies to ſleep in Duſt, bidding them adieu, till a happy Meeting in Heaven, having a comfortable Aſſurance of the Pardon of our Sins, and a well-grounded Hope of a joyful Reſurrection to eternal Life? How chearfully would theſe Souls of ours welcome their Liberty, and flie forth into the Embraces of their *Bridegroom* and *Redeemer!* How joyfully would they ſa-

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lute those bright *Angels* that come at his Command, to convey them into *Abraham's* Bosom, to rest in perfect Peace in the Presence of *God* for ever and ever! O blessed *Rest*, a *Rest* as strange as desirable, a Rest upon *Thrones*, with a *Crown* and a *Kingdom*, such as never was, nor ever shall be upon Earth. And is not all this enough to invite us unto Christ?

2. All this he will *freely give* us. Did he call upon us to buy it, we might for ever despair of it, because we have nothing to pay for it; nothing we could bid for it, but we must undervalue it, and the more undeserve it. Did he expect we should do some notable Service to merit it, we could never hope for it. But here is all the Comfort in the World; as we are Beggars, and have nothing, so he inviteth us to come, and take for nothing, to come and buy, but without Money and without Price. Then indeed we *buy* it, when we give *ourselves* to *Christ* for it, and value it above all Price that Man can pay. Thus let us prize it, and thus let us give ourselves to *Christ* to receive it, and be sure he will give it.

3. He will give it, even *he* whose it is, who hath purchased it at the dearest Rate that it could be bought at, *not with corruptible*

ruptible Things, with Silver or Gold, but with his own moſt precious Blood: 1 Pet. i. 18. Hence ſhould we learn how to value it, and hence ſhould we learn how to thank him for ſuch a Gift. It may be ours for coming, but he hath it not for us at ſo cheap a Rate. *He became a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief; he hath borne our Griefs and carrried our Sorrows; he was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our Iniquities, the chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him, by his Stripes we are healed. The Lord laid on him the Iniquity of us all,* Iſa. liii. Our Sins robbed *him* of all *Reſt*, that *he* might give us Reſt. *He* wore a *Crown* of *Thorns*, that he might give us a *Crown* of *Glory*; he was mocked, and ſuffered *Shame*, that he might bring us to *Honour*; he was led like a *Lamb* to the Slaughter, that he might place us among his *Sheep*, at his Right hand in his Kingdom. And is his free Invitation to all this dear-bought Mercy to be ſlighted by us? If this threefold Conſideration of *ourſelves*, our *Saviour*, and our *Hopes*, will not prevail with us to *come* unto *Chriſt*, to be his conſtant Diſciples and obedient Subjects, I muſt needs ſay, I do not know any Thing that can be ſaid by

by Man likely to move us. This therefore ſhall ſuffice to have been ſaid by Way of *Perſwaſion*.

CHAP. II.

SECT. I.

WE come now to the *ſecond* Thing intended, *viz. Direction*. It is to be hoped that there are amongſt us, at leaſt, ſome few, and I wiſh they be more than a few, who having heard all this, are not willing to be eternally miſerable, but will be content rather to take ſome Pains, whilſt there is Hope, to come unto *Chriſt*, than to be for ever without that bleſſed *Reſt* which he ſo freely promiſeth to give us. Some few may poſſibly begin to be pricked at the Heart, and ready to aſk, *Sirs, what ſhall we do to be ſaved?* How ſhall we behave ourſelves? What Courſe ſhall we take to come ſo unto *Chriſt*, as to be ſure of *Reſt* to our Souls? If any ſuch there be, they are prepared to receive Directions, and for their Satisfaction ſomething is to be ſaid more.

We

We have already heard, to our great Comfort and Encouragement, if we will but mind it, that amongſt all thoſe numerous Souls that are laden with Sin, there is not one excluded or debarred by *Chriſt* from the Liberty of *coming* to him. This is a great Encouragement to all poor Sinners, that there is a Way to come, and they are all invited. *Suffer theſe little ones*, ſaith Chriſt, *to come unto me, and forbid them not.* Mark x. Let us labour to be but *little* enough in our own Eſteem, and then the poorer and meaner, the baſer and viler we are in our own Eyes, or in the Eye of the World, the welcomer Gueſts are we like to be to *Chriſt*. Not the righteous and proud *Phariſee*, that counts no Man *godly* but himſelf, and ſome few that are of his *Opinion* and *Sect*, and on that Account ſtandeth at a Diſtance from the mixed Multitude, for fear of Pollution, though the ſower Leaven was more likely to ſour the Maſs of Dough, than the Dough to infect it; but the *ſinful*, yet *humble Publican*, whoſe Humility ſet him in his own Opinion at a Diſtance, not from other Men, but from God, ſo that he durſt hardly lift up his Eyes to Heaven, much leſs caſt a ſcornful Eye upon

upon his Brethren, is like to be honoured with *Christ*'s Acceptance. Let our Sighs, our Groans, and our Tears, be heard and seen by him, though they be not made visible to Men; let him see us *poor in Spirit*, and of a *broken and contrite Heart, hungring and thirsting after his Righteousness*, not filled, and even glutted, as some seem to be, with a Conceit of their own, it maketh no Matter of what Degree or Quality, Age or Sex, honest Calling or Profession we are of, *there is no Respect of Persons with God.* Too many proud and haughty Spirits, too many drudging and worldly Souls, too many nice and voluptuous Creatures, will not be at the Pains to come. But as it is not the Greatness of our secular Employments, or the Multitude of our private Businesses; as it is not the Greatness of our Persons, or the Nobility of our Parentage; the Delicacy of our Breeding, or the Largeness of our Patrimony; the Tenderness of our Sex, the Feebleness of old Age, or the Greenness of Youth; the Confidence of our healthful Constitution, or Hopes of long Life; the Opinion of our great Parts, much Knowledge, or godly Tenets, or any other Quality or Condition, can

can make us a Diſpenſation for not coming; that is, can ſecure us of the Reſt promiſed by *Chriſt*, though we do not the Duty of *Chriſtians*: So neither is there any Thing that ſhould affright us, whilſt we do the Duty of *Chriſtians*, from hoping for Reſt by *Chriſt*. All may come, without Exception, that's our great Privilege; and all ought to come, without Exception, that's our bounden Duty. All that are weary *may* come, all that will have Reſt *muſt* come. Yet, as ever we hope to ſpeed by coming, let us be careful that we come aright. Let us have ever before our Eyes, as a Warning to us, the ſad Example of Chriſt's Indignation towards the negligent and careleſs Comer. He that, being invited, was ſo impudent as to come without his *Wedding-Garment*, found to his Sorrow a Welcome anſwerable to his bold Impiety. A ſad kind of Reſt he found it to *be*, *bound Hand and Foot*, *and caſt into utter Darkneſs*. Matt. xxii. 13. This is read in a Parable, and it warneth us to draw near unto *Chriſt* with Reverence and godly Fear, as unto the moſt glorious *God*, as well as unto the merciful *Saviour* of Sinners. Come we muſt ſo, as firmly purpoſing to continue with him for ever;

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for if ever we depart from him again, we ſhall be ſure to go away much worſe than we came, and ſhall not find a ſecond Admiſſion ſo eaſy, as it may be ſome of us do think it to be.

§. II. Now if we would come aright, we muſt conſider thus much at leaſt before-hand. 1. That *coming* is a *Motion*. If we would therefore have the *Reſt* that *Chriſt* promiſeth, we muſt not give ourſelves Reſt before-hand, or reſolve to lead a lazy and idle Life. 2. That it muſt not be a *ſlow Motion* neither, but we muſt *run, that we may obtain.* 1 Cor. ix. 24. It is a great Way to Heaven, and Sin hath ſet us at a great Diſtance from *God*, and the Time allotted us is *ſhort*, and much of that already loſt by many of us. As ever we hope therefore to ſee *God*, let us ſet forth quickly, go with what Speed we can, and loſe no Time. We muſt not hope, as too many by their Practice ſeem to do, that we may obtain, and not run; reſt, and not labour; be happy, and not be holy; have the Reward, and do no Service; triumph, and not conquer; wear the Crown, and not finiſh the Courſe; have a Saviour, go to Heaven, and enjoy

joy God, and not walk in his Way, nor keep his Commandments; nor run with Patience the Race he hath ſet before us; nor uſe with all Care and Conſcience, the Helps and Means which his infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs hath ordained. Sitting is at preſent no eaſeful Poſture to a weary Soul. He that is ſenſible of his Load, and layeth himſelf down under it, may there ſigh and groan out his Soul, and be preſſed to Death through his own Sloth. 3. This *Motion* muſt be *ſtreight and direct*, right forward toward *Chriſt*. It muſt not be an *irregular* or *diſorderly* Motion; it is not a running over Hedges and Ditches, or a wild roving about at Random, nor a picking and chuſing out a Way that beſt pleaſeth a Man's Fancy, or is ſofteſt for his Feet, or that which he takes to be the ſhorteſt Cut, or where he may hope to meet with the leaſt Oppoſition or Difficulties. Too many, God knows, are apt to be led by their own wild Imaginations and giddy Humours, toward a Chriſt dreſſed up by their own working Heads, to their own Liking, even till they have run themſelves into a Labyrinth of Errors, and ſo loſe themſelves irrecoverably in the confident Opinion of their own eminent Piety. Neither yet muſt

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it be a *violent* Motion, the Principles whereof is without a Man. There are too many that, it may be, conſtantly frequent the publick Aſſemblies, and ſeem to worſhip God very orderly among their Neighbours in his religious Ordinances, yea, are very ſtrict Obſervers too of all outward Acts of Devotion, Piety and Juſtice, and yet from no true Principle of Religion in the Heart; but, it may be, either through Fear, or Shame, or ſome temporal or worldly Advantage; ſomething is got or ſomething is ſaved by it, which they love more than true Piety: They may be either drawn or driven againſt their Inclination: Many little Engines there are to ſcrew a Man up into a Poſture and *Form of Godlineſs*, which may be paſt the Diſcovery of any other but *God* and themſelves. If we will come to *Chriſt*, we muſt not move like a Boy's Gigg, never right forward but when driven with the Laſh, and yet 'tis ſtill winding about; and though it ſeems ſometime to move of itſelf, it doth not ſo indeed. He that cometh to *Chriſt*, hath ſomething *within* him will cauſe him to move, even the Senſe of his Obligation, and his Need ſo to do, and an active Heat of Love, naturally tending towards

towards the proper Object of it. How much the wearier a Man is of Sin, ſo much the faſter will he move; nor will there be any even and conſtant Motion, without the Senſe of that Weight that is upon us.

§. III. Theſe Things conſidered, that we may be the better directed in our coming to Chriſt, we muſt next call to mind, *from what*, to *what*, and *how* we are to come.

1. We muſt remember *from what* we muſt come, if we will come to *Chriſt*. Even from *every* Thing but *Chriſt*, ſo far as it may prove any Hindrance to us. *All Things* elſe we muſt learn to *count but Loſs and Dung, ſo we may win Chriſt*. Phil. iii. 8. He himſelf hath expreſly told us, Luke xiv. 33. *That whoſoever he be that forſaketh not all that he hath, cannot be his Diſciple*. And leſt we ſhould think this *All* is not ſo comprehenſive as indeed it is, but may admit of ſome Limitation or Reſtraint, he inſtanceth it in the choiceſt and deareſt of all worldly Things, ſo that he leaveth no Room for any Exception, ver. 26. *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren*

Brethren and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple.

More particularly, in *coming* to *Christ*, we must take Leave of these three, *Sin*, the *World* and *ourselves*.

1. We must bid farewel for ever to *Sin*, to *all* Sin, but more solemnly to all our *best beloved* Sins, with a well fixed Resolution to shun very scrupulously all the Occasions of Sin, and to resist all Temptations to it. Sin is the heavy Load we must feel, and feeling, hate; and hating, strive, by all Means to cast off. The *Guilt* of it indeed we cannot remove, we go unto *Christ* for that: Nay, the *Stain* and *Infection* of it we cannot quite put away, but come unto *Christ* for that too. But the *Pleasure* of it, the *Love* of it, the *willing* Obedience to it, this we must be daily casting off. The true Sense of the Evil in it, whensoever *God* awaketh us, and gives us it, will bring us to that. However, this must be a great Motive of coming to *Christ*, that we may, by the Power of his Grace, be more and more freed from Sin, trusting to nothing else for this Freedom. It must be our Resolution never to be Friends with it any more, but to wage a continual War under

Chriſt's Banner againſt it. Many would very willingly come unto *Chriſt* to get a Pardon for all paſt Sins, this is but a natural Thing, to deſire to be out of Danger, and to be freed from all Fear of Puniſhment. Who is there that thinketh he needs ſuch a Thing, that can chuſe but deſire it? Or that would not be at ſome Pains and Coſt to procure it? No Man is ſimply willing to die and be miſerable But to hate Sin, to be weary of our Luſts, to reſiſt our own ſtrongeſt Inclinations, to loath all Wickedneſs, what Profit, or Praiſe, or Honour, or Pleaſure ſoever, of any Kind, it bring us in. To love *God* for *himſelf*, and *Holineſs*, becauſe *God* is a *holy God*, and to deſire from the Heart to be *holy as he is holy*, and as capable as our Natures can be made of honouring *God*, this is ſomething more than natural, as Nature is now corrupted in us, and this muſt be our great Deſign in coming to *Chriſt*. Therefore, *let every one that nameth the Name of Chriſt depart from Iniquity*. 2 Tim. ii. 19.

2. We muſt in the next Place bid farewel to the *World*, to all the tempting Bates and flattering Allurements of the World; to all the Honours, and Pleaſures,

Pleaſures, and Profits of the World, ſo far as they are Temptations to Evil, or Obſtacles to Good, though never ſo fair, ſweet, lovely and rich. *For the Friendſhip of this World is Enmity with God; whoſoever therefore will be a Friend of this World, is the Enemy of God.* Jam. iv. 4. And St. *John* warneth us, *Not to love the World, neither the Things that are in the World: For if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.* 1 John ii. 15. And as we muſt renounce the *Things* of the World as they ſtand in our Way to *Chriſt*, ſo alſo the *Men* of the World, as the Enemies of *Chriſt*. As our *Saviour*, on another Occaſion, ſaid to his Diſciples, ſo muſt we ſuppoſe him to ſay unto us, when he commandeth us to come unto him. *Come yourſelves apart.* Matt. vi. 31. *If any Man that is called a Brother, be a Fornicator, or covetous, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner,* the Apoſtle warneth us, *not to keep Company with ſuch an one, no, not to eat.* 1 Cor. v. 11.

III. Yea laſtly, we muſt bid adieu to *ourſelves*, that is, to all that is carnal or ſinful in us. Our Luſts and Ambitions, our Intereſts and Humours, our corrupt

Reaſonings and Wills, all muſt be laid down at the Feet of *Chriſt*. *We muſt put off the old Man, which is corrupt*, with all his Deſires and Works, and come to *put on the new Man, which after God is created in Righteouſneſs, and true Holineſs*. Eph. iv. 22. and 24. Chriſt himſelf hath told us it very plainly, *Mark* viii. 34. That *whoſoever will come after him, muſt deny himſelf, and take up his Croſs, and follow him*. He muſt be willing and ready to do, loſe or ſuffer any Thing; he muſt have no regard to his own carnal Will or Deſires; he muſt ſet light by his Pleaſures and worldly Contentments, ſo that he may come to *Jeſus*.

§. IV. Theſe Things, thus briefly touched, we muſt wholly forſake, even as we *promiſe* and *vow* to do, when we firſt ſet forth towards *Chriſt* in *Baptiſm*. Whenever therefore we love, humour, or adhere to any of theſe, we go ſo far backwards again from *Chriſt*. And alas, how far are many of us thus gone from him, who then vowed to continue with him for ever? How is this Vow, ſo ſolemnly made to the bleſſed Trinity, in the Face of the Church, quite forgotten,

gotten, or wholly diſregarded by the moſt, and, it may be, never once ſeriouſly thought on by many, ſince the Day they made it? If the Lives of the Generality of thoſe who have been *baptized* be to be credited, nothing can be plainer, than that they are nothing leſs, than what they then engaged to be, true *Chriſtians*, nothing at all of *Chriſtianity* appearing in them. By the whole Courſe of many Men's Converſation, a Man would verily think, that inſtead of promiſing what they did, they had indeed ſworn all that is contrary to it; that they are moſt ſcrupulous in performing it to the very minuteſt Circumſtance. What if Men had tied themſelves by all the ſtrongeſt Bonds in the World, *to follow the Devil and all his Works, to love the Pomps and Vanities of the wicked World, and to fulfil all the Luſts of the Fleſh; to renounce Chriſt and his Goſpel, and never to keep any of God's Commandments?* How could any Man demonſtrate to the World his great Care to keep ſuch an Oath more convincingly, than by leading ſuch Lives in all Reſpects, as very many now do who have vowed the contrary in *Baptiſm?* There is not any Thing in the World, that ſuch Men

more thirſtingly deſire, or with greater Impatience long for, and hunt after with all their Might and Skill, than theſe very Things, which in their *Baptiſm* they renounced. The *Works of the Devil*, even thoſe Works which *Chriſt* came to deſtroy, and they have vow'd under him to fight againſt, they will do, whatſoever it coſt them. They that promiſed to renounce all *worldly Pomps and Vanities*, ſet their Affections altogether upon them, with all their Heart and Soul cleave unto them, love, worſhip, ſpend all their Strength, Labour, Study, Time, and whatever ought to be moſt precious, in labouring for them. The *Fleſh*, their carnal ſelves, their own corrupt Wills, Luſts, and Deſires, make up the great *Idol* and *Belly-god* that devoureth all, for which all Things are ſought with much Labour, bought at an unreaſonable Rate; to which they are all freely ſacrificed. *Finally*, for which they are ſo madly zealous, that they perfectly hate, and would gladly deſtroy every Thing or Perſon, that will not humour, worſhip and ſerve it. All this conſidered, which is but too viſible, and cannot be hid, what a very few of thoſe great Numbers which are *baptized*, can

can with any Appearance of Truth be ſaid to have yet made ſo much as one Step towards *Chriſt?* Nay, we cannot perſwade the greater Number of them ſo much as to think on what they have promiſed, nor to be at the ſmall Pains to learn, by ſhort and eaſy *Catechiſms*, what that Promiſe meant; and fewer yet will be brought to the ſerious publick owning of it, and a profeſſing of their Reſolution to keep it in *Confirmation*. And yet all of them will needs paſs for *Chriſtians*, and think themſelves much injured, if they be denied any of the Privileges which belong to *Chriſtians*. O that Men would a little better conſider what they do, and whither it is that they are going all this while. If this be the Way to *Chriſt*, or to *Reſt*, then is the *broad Way* the only Way that leadeth unto *Life*, and *few* there be that walk in the Way to Deſtruction; then hath *Chriſt* deceived us, when he told us the contrary, and Men are ſaved not by *Faith* but by *Unbelief*; not by coming to *Chriſt*, but by going from him: Let us again and again think of this, and before that we venture any more thus to *mock God*, be ſure that we do not *deceive* ourſelves. Ere we dare to

call ourſelves by the Name of *Chriſt*, and to flatter ourſelves with the Hopes of eternal Reſt by him, conſider well what it is that he requireth of us, what *Chriſtianity* doth indeed import, and what Coſt it may poſſibly put us to, what Force and Strength is neceſſary to encounter all that may oppoſe us, and to ſtruggle through the Difficulties we may meet with. Read conſideringly the Parables, *Luke* xiv. 28, 31. and be admoniſhed by them to go to work adviſedly. It is for want of underſtanding or conſidering this, that we walk as generally we do, and go on with ſo much Confidence of Life in the Paths of Deſtruction.

§. V. 2. In the *next* Place therefore, having ſeen what we muſt leave behind us, and go from, let us inform ourſelves well *who* it is that we are *going to*. 1. *Learn to know him well*, what Kind of Perſon he is, leſt we miſtake for him ſome falſe *Chriſt* of our own making. 2. *Learn to know the Ways* wherein he will be found, and give us free Acceſs.

I. Learn to *know Chriſt* perfectly, obſerve punctually how he is deſcribed unto us by his own *Spirit* in his *Word*. Let us make ſure of this, that it be the very

very *Chriſt* indeed, that we have before our Eyes in our walking. That eternal and only *Son* of *God*, ordained of the *Father* before the Foundation of the World; promiſed to the Fathers from the Beginning of the World; ſhadowed forth in many Types and Figures; foretold by many Prophets; and *laſtly*, exhibited unto the World in Fulneſs of Time in our Fleſh, and now at the Right-hand of the *Father* in Heaven, in higheſt Glory and Majeſty. We muſt *firſt* labour to be well aſſured that this ſame *Jeſus* is *he*, the *Anointed of the Lord*, to be the *Saviour* of the World. For it cannot be reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that any Man will hold out in the Way through all the Difficulties he may poſſibly meet with in it, if he be not fully ſatisfied, that this is the very *Saviour* ſent of *God* to bring him to *Reſt*. Yet is not this all, but we muſt farther rightly inform ourſelves what *Manner* of *Saviour* he is. A *Saviour* we would all have, there is no Queſtion to be made of that, and ſuch an one he truly is: But let us conſider it well, as before we heard, he is our *Saviour*, as he is a *Mediator between God and Men*. And as to this End, he is Partaker of both Natures: *He is the Man Chriſt Jeſus*, 1 Tim. ii. 5.

And he is the true *God over all, bleſſed for ever.* Rom. ix. 5. So he came to reconcile *God* and *Man*, and ſet them at one again; and we muſt come unto him, as unto *God*; unto the *Father* in *him* and *by him:* Even as unto the *Holy God*, before whom no unclean Thing muſt appear; the only Good upon which all our Love muſt be placed; the chief and ultimate End, unto which all our Deſires, Deſigns, and Endeavours are to be directed. He is our *Saviour*; but to ſave us, he is to teach us, to guide us, and govern us. We cannot come unto him as a *Saviour*, but by becoming his *Scholars*, and learning of him as the great *Teacher come from God*, as the *Prophet* whom we are to hear in all Things, and by following him, as the great Exemplar of all Holineſs, having the ſame *Mind in us that was in him.* Phil. ii. 5. *Learning of him to be meek and lowly of Heart.* Matt. xi. 29. Giving ourſelves into his Hands, to be *conformed to his Image.* Rom. viii. 29. To *tread in his Steps* 1 Pet. ii. 21. Both in a chearful doing and patient ſuffering the Will of the *Father*, in a total Conformity to him, both in his Death and Reſurrection. And *laſtly*, by reſigning ourſelves intirely to his ordering and Diſpoſal,

poſal, as thoſe that are *his own, whom he hath bought with a Price.* 1 Cor. vi. 20. Diſclaiming all farther Right in, and over ourſelves, than he is pleaſed to allow us, not chuſing for ourſelves our own Work or Condition, as beſt ſuiteth with our own Wills and Inclinations, but contenting ourſelves with his choice Allowance and Appointment: Yielding abſolute Obedience to his Laws, deſirous that he may totally ſubdue our Luſts, enthrone himſelf ſolely in our Hearts, and rule himſelf alone within us and over us. If we look for any other *Saviour*, but ſuch an one as this, we do but deceive ourſelves, and go to ſome Creature of our own Fancy, inſtead of coming to the *Lord our Saviour.* If then *we be his Sheep, we will hear his Voice and follow him, and the Voice of Strangers will we not hear.* John x. 3, 5. Knowing and following him, we will confide in him, as our only Strength and Tower, and ſure Rock of Salvation. But *why*, ſaith he, *call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the Things which I ſay unto you.* Luke vi. 46. So far is he from being a *Saviour* to ſuch as obey not his Goſpel, that he hath aſſured us that *all they that will not have him to reign over them, ſhall, as his Enemies, be*

brought

brought forth, and ſlain before him. Luke xix. 17.

§. VI. 2. When we have thus learned truly to *know* him, it will now be eaſy for us to learn in what *Ways*, or by what *Means*, we may have Acceſs unto him

I. We muſt come unto him in his *Word*, believing verily the Truth of every Word that proceedeth out of his Mouth, and feeding upon it as the moſt ſavoury and wholſome Food of our Souls.

1. Receive his *Promiſes*, and nouriſh our *Hope* with them, never ſuffering our Souls, no, not in the Midſt of Perſecutions or Torments, to faint, droop, or deſpair: In all Things comforting and chearing up our Hearts, with this ſure Confidence, that *he is faithful that hath promiſed*, and that *all Things ſhall* undoubtedly *work together for Good to thoſe that love him.* Rom. viii. 28. *This Hope* thus grounded on his Promiſes, *is the ſure Anchor of our Souls.* Heb. vi. 19. that muſt hold them firm and ſteady; elſe ſhall we never be able to bear up againſt the Winds and Waves which may beat upon us.

2 We

2. We muſt come unto him in his *Merits*, with a ſure *Truſt* and Confidence, that how many and great ſoever the Sins may be which we labour under, they are not enough to diſmay us from coming unto him, or to ſink us in the Way to him, if in good Earneſt we ſet forward. Though they be like ſo many Weights of Lead, enough of themſelves to preſs down our Souls to the loweſt Hell, yet are his *Merits* ſufficient to bear us up, and exalt us to the higheſt Heaven: Though they be as *Crimſon* or *Scarlet*, yet his Blood hath Vertue enough to make us as white as *Snow* or *Wool*. Seven Devils ſhall not be able to drag one poor Woman to Hell; if ſhe can but come to *Chriſt*, they ſhall all flee before him.

3. We muſt come unto him in his *Precepts* or Commands, by a ſincere *Obedience*; and howſoever Fleſh and Blood may be affrighted at the Sight of them, and perſuade us from touching them, poſſeſſing us with hard Thoughts of them, as of Things intolerable; and with troubleſome Fears of loſing all our preſent Eaſe and Comforts by them, always clamouring within us, ſaying, Maſter, ſpare thyſelf: Yet muſt we not

give Ear to any Thing of this, but ſtoutly and reſolutely put forward, girding up our Loins, ſetting in Earneſt about our Work, and perſevering unto the End, truſting in his Strength that calleth us, and will enable us to do and ſuffer any Thing for his Sake.

2. Come unto him as our *Head*, and *Governor*, and ſovereign *Lord*, and with all *Subjection* and Humility, with all Submiſſion and due Reverence, reſigning ourſelves freely to him, our Perſons and all our Concerns at once, how many or great ſoever; worſhipping his Majeſty, obeying his Commands, imitating his Goodneſs, and relying on his Providence and Protection. And here we are to remember that he hath Officers and Servants upon Earth, both *Magiſtrates* and *Miniſters*.

We muſt come unto him in *Kings* and *Governors*, and be *ſubject to them for Conſcience-ſake*. Rom. xiii. 5. obeying *every Ordinance of Man, for the Lord's Sake*. 1 Pet. ii. 13. And although we ſhould *ſuffer for well doing, yet take it patiently*, knowing that *this is acceptable to the Lord*. 1 Pet. ii. 20. Our Obedience unto *Cæſar* is a Debt we owe unto *Chriſt*; and therefore except we render unto *Cæſar*

the

the Things that are Cæſar's, we cannot render unto *Chriſt* the Things that are *Chriſt's*. There can be no *reſiſting* the *Magiſtrate* on Pretence that he would drive us from *Chriſt*; for he cannot drive us from him except we will; we may follow him even to the *Croſs*, when the Magiſtrate hath done all he can.

We muſt come unto him in his *Miniſters*, with due Honour, Attention, and Affection, as unto thoſe his Servants who are ſent forth by him to invite us, to lead us, to encourage us, under him, to govern us in the Conduct of our Souls, to take us by the Hand, and ſtrengthen us in his Paths, leſt we ſlip, or fall, or faint, or go aſtray. If we refuſe to come to theſe, to hearken diligently to their Directions, to be guided willingly by their Hand, to love and honour them highly for their Works Sake, we ſhall not eaſily come unto our and their great *Lord* and *Maſter*, with whom we hope to reſt.

3. We muſt come unto him in all his holy *Ordinances* of religious Worſhip; in *Prayer*, in *preaching*, in the *Sacraments*, with true Devotion, Fervency, and Zeal; with an hungering and thirſting after Righteouſneſs, with an earneſt Deſire and longing to be ſatisfied with the Fatneſs of

of his Houſe, and the Fulneſs of his Table. If we refuſe to come unto him in his Houſe, the Aſſembly of his Saints, amongſt two or three gathered together in his Name, in the Midſt of whom he hath promiſed to be, we have leſs Cauſe to hope he will meet us in our Cloſets, or, as many had rather have it, in our Beds.

In ſhort, come unto him in all theſe; upon the *Croſs*, and embrace him, and ſuffer with him; on the *Mount*, and in the *Pulpit*, and hearken to him, and be taught by him; on the *Throne*, and be ſubject to him, adore, obey, and be ſaved by him. Such are the Ways we muſt walk in, if we would come to Chriſt.

§ VII. 3. Let us now briefly ſee *how* we are to come. Come; 1. *As Men laden.* 2. *As unto Chriſt.* 3 *As for Reſt.*

I. Come as they that are heavy-laden, that are truly weary, that long to caſt off their Load.

1. With a very humbling Senſe of our Condition, let it be ſeen that we feel and underſtand what vile Things we are, and that we are aſhamed of ourſelves, and of the Filth we carry.

2. With

2. With a perfect Hatred of our Burden, and that eſpecially becauſe it unfits us for honouring *God*, and is diſhonourable to him.

3. With an hearty Deſire and full Reſolution to caſt it off ſo ſoon as poſſibly we can, diligently attending to all Directions, and carefully uſing all Means commended unto us to that Purpoſe.

Come then as Men that feel themſelves uneaſy, and can have no Reſt in their Hearts, no Quiet in their Minds, no Satisfaction in themſelves, but feel always ſomething like a ſharp Goad, pricking them forward to *Chriſt*.

II. Come as unto *Chriſt*, as untoo ne, of whom we are very ſure that he is both *able* and *willing* to eaſe us.

1. Laying open all our Grievances impartially, in an humbleCone ffi on fore him.

2. Humbly acknowledging our great Unworthineſs or any ſuch Mercy as we come to receive of him.

3. Earneſtly begging and importuning him with our moſt fervent Prayers to pity us. Take no Denial.

4. Carefully uſing all the Helps he offereth us, and putting forth all the Strength he giveth us.

5. Chear-

5. Chearfully accepting his own Terms accounting it a great Happineſs, that we may change our heavy Burden for a lighter. Let us willingly bow down and offer our Necks to his *eaſy Yoke*, our Backs to his *light Burden*: This is the only Way to be free from *Satan*'s Slavery, to let him ſee we are engaged in *Chriſt*'s Service.

III. Come as they that *know* and *prize* what they come for. And ſo,

1. Let us come with much *Joy* and Chearfulneſs; the very Hope of being at Reſt giveth Eaſe to the Weary; let us ſhew how much we are affected with this Liberty of coming to *Chriſt*. Away with all dejected and cloudy Looks, leſt we ſeem to come unwillingly, to find no Pleaſure in the Way, or little Hope of ſpeeding: This were to diſhearten others, by bringing up an evil Report of the Way we walk in.

2. Let our Ears be cloſed againſt all the Solicitations of the World and its Vanities, our own Fleſh, and its Cravings, the Devil, and his Terrors and Threatenings. How loud ſoever theſe cry after us, how much ſoever they court us to return, let us have no Ear open to them, but go on.

3. Let us come with all *Haſte*, *ſeek him To-day while he may be found*, call upon him whilſt he calls upon us. It is no Sign that we are weary of our Burden, if we would fain carry it a while longer. That Man was never truly ſenſible of his Diſeaſe, who when his Phyſician would cure him, deſireth to be ſick yet one Day more. Now *Chriſt* declareth himſelf ready to receive all Comers, to give Audience to all their Petitions. If we let ſlip this Opportunity, we are not ſure of another. We never heard among all *Chriſt*'s Invitations, that ever he invited any one to come To-morrow. One would but have gone to bid them farewell at Home, and another would have gone to bury his Father, but *Chriſt* would allow of neither. *Luk.* ix. 59. The *fooliſh Virgins* that ſtay'd behind their Fellows were ſhut out for ever. *Mat.* xxv. If we would come in Time, let us ſet forth *now*. 'Tis dangerous to think of going to *Chriſt* towards the Evening. So many Miſts and Vapours, ſo many Thieves and Robbers, ſo much Darkneſs, and ſuch bad Eyes about the Sun-ſetting, the Evening of old Age; ſo many Ghoſts and frightful Apparitions are ſaid to be in the Night, and near

near the Grave, that if we defer our going till then, a Thouſand to one we ſhall loſe our Way, or the Door may be ſhut, and after much calling and crying, *Lord open to us*, we ſhall have no other Anſwer, but, *Be gone, I know you not, depart ye Curſed.*

CHAP. III.

HAVING ſaid theſe Things very briefly, becauſe they have been already more largely ſpoken of, there remains now but *two* Things to be added. 1. A Word or *two* more to the careleſs Sinners, to make them, if it may be, a little more ſenſible of their Folly in delaying to accept of this Invitation. 2. An Encouragement to thoſe diſconſolate Chriſtians that trouble themſelves with Doubts and Fears that they are not come, when indeed they are.

§. I. 1. And *firſt*, is it not a Thing very wonderful, yea, can you chuſe but wonder at it yourſelves? All you, I ſay, who have the greateſt Need of the Mercy which is here offered, that after it hath been ſo often offered, and you have been ſo earneſtly intreated to accept it, ſo that a Man cannot imagine what *Chriſt* ſhould do more, unleſs he ſhould force it upon you againſt your Will, and that would imply a Contradiction. To give a Man Reſt againſt his Will, is to give him no Reſt: Is it not a Wonder, that after all this

this hath been done by *Chriſt*, you ſhould yet refuſe your own Welfare, and continue wilfully ſick, and every Mo men at Death's Door, when the *Phyſician* ſtandeth over you, and intreateth you to accept of his Help and be well? To ſee ſo many lame *Cripples* lying in the Porches of *Bethesda*, ſo many *Lepers* ſitting on the Banks of *Jordan*, ſo many *ſick Folks* troubled with divers Diſeaſes lying in the *Highways*, where *Chriſt* is daily paſſing by, and ſo few healed? Is not the *Angel* always ready to move the Waters, and calling on you to ſtep in quickly, and be whole? Are not the *Prophets* daily calling out unto you, bidding you in *God*'s Name to waſh and be clean? Is not a Touch of the very *Border* of *Chriſt*'s *Garment* ſufficient to heal us all? To ſee ſo many weary Travellers continually paſſing by the Place of Eaſe and Refreſhment, where there is never wanting one or other of *Chriſt*'s Servants ſtanding at the Gate, and inviting them moſt heartily to turn in and refreſh themſelves: Is not this ſtrange indeed? Let any Man but hearken to the common Cries of the World, and he ſhall hear almoſt Nothing on any Side, but grievous Complaints, ſad Outcries, pitiful Moanings and Lamentations.

tions. Come and go as often as he will, and ſtill he ſhall hear the ſame ſad Notes; here a Groan, and there a grumbling; every where ſour Countenances, and clouded Foreheads, ſpeak diſcontented Hearts, and reſtleſs Minds. Every one is complaining of a Load of one Sort or other, though it be but that which his own Conceit hath made and laid upon him.

Some we ſee labouring and toiling hard for a very poor and ſcanty Livelihood in this World, finding the Hearts of others harder than their own Labours, complaining how hardly the World goes with them, and that their Hands are not able, with all their painful Labour, to fill the hungry Bellies of Wife and Children. Others lie ſick upon their uneaſy Beds, how ſoft ſoever they be, and the whole Houſe is filled with the Sighs and Groans of the Sick, and the Tears and Lamentations of ſorrowful Relations and Friends, who ſuppoſe all their Comforts and Hopes expiring at once with a dying Father or Mother, Huſband or Wife, Child or Friend. Others walk, and ſit, and lie with Heads laden with Cares and Contrivances, hourly tormented with Multitudes of anxious and diſtracting Thoughts,

Thoughts, and their Hearts even broken with unthought-of Diſappointments, great Loſſes, daily Croſſes and Inconveniences, their diſcontented Souls fretting their Bodies and conſuming their Fleſh to the very Bone by a continual gnawing. Many more there be in a worſe Condition than any of theſe, ſweating inceſſantly in the wretched Drudgery of their tyrannizing Luſts, without any Poſſibility of giving them Satisfaction; tiring themſelves in *drawing Iniquity with Cords of Vanity, and Sin as it were with a Cart-rope.* Iſa. v. 18. *Wearying themſelves to commit Iniquity.* Jer. ix. 5. and never have enough of it. One Man hath loſt his Friends, another his Eſtate, a third his Liberty. One cannot obtain his Suit, another is fruſtated in his Hope, a third is not ſeated in the World to his Mind. Many have long laboured for the Wind, and miſcarry in thoſe great Deſigns and Projects they have for many Years been big with. Here's a poor Man crying out becauſe he hath Nothing, and there's a rich Man grumbling that he hath not all, or as much more than enough, as others have leſs than he. Here's an ambitious Spirit fuming that he is not above all the World, and there's an envious Soul even dying becauſe he ſeeth any one in a better

a better Condition than himſelf: And there's a voluptuous Epicure angry that he dares not ſin as freely as he eateth. Where can a Man go, but he ſhall find thoſe, that rather than not be ſo, will make themſelves miſerable, yea, and with much Pains contrive how to continue their own Vexation, and yet are continually complaining of it. One Man is vexed by another, and another doth all he can to vex others, and every Man is moſt of all vexed by himſelf. Some have laboured, and gained ſo much of what they would have by their wicked Labour, that nothing is ſo grievous to them as to be made to reſt from their gainful Trouble. Others have labour'd ſo long under Oppreſſion and Want, that they cannot reſt, till they ſee their Oppreſſors labour as much in the ſame Kind as they have done. Here's one that hath climbed up to the higheſt Pinnacle on Fortune's Temple, and now is troubled to maintain his Footing and his Height, being ſuſpected by ſome, ſhot at by others, envied by many, loved by few. There is another that thinketh, though he hath not yet got ſo high, he hath at leaſt deſerved it as well, and vexeth himſelf to ſee another, as he thinks, where

the Place would beſt become himſelf. Who can think upon one Half of thoſe labouring Souls that are in the World. And muſt it not now ſeem very wonderful, that Eaſe and Reſt ſhould be ſo plainly laid open before them all, and yet hardly one of a Thouſand aiming at it? All want, and all would have it, but few will come unto *Chriſt* for it: As if Men ſcorn'd all Eaſe that is not the Fruit of their own Contrivance, or thought it below them to be beholden unto *Chriſt* for a Reſt of his procuring. *He* is ready to *ſatiate every weary Soul, and to repleniſh every ſorrowful Soul.* Jer. xxxi. 25. *He* hath prepared a *Kingdom for them who are perſecuted for Righteouſneſs Sake.* Matt. v. 10. *He* hath bid us by his *Apoſtle* to *caſt all our Care upon him, for he careth for us. He* would *heal the Broken-hearted, and preach Deliverance to the Captives, Recovery of Sight to the Blind, and ſet at Liberty them that are bruſed.* Luk. iv. 18. How ſad a Thing is it now to think that any of us ſhould be ſo blinded by our Luſts, as not to ſee all this Goodneſs of the Lord, or be ſo fooled by the Devil and the World as not to embrace it. But oh! what a killing Sight is it to ſee many and many proud of their Yoke, boaſting of their Burden, ſwaggering

gering in their Chains, vaunting themſelves of their Infirmities, eſteeming it Cowardice to fear an Hell, Puſillanimity and unmanly Weekneſs to tremble at God's Judgments, mourn for Sin, or cry out to *God* for Help. How long will Men keep at this Diſtance from *Chriſt?*

In *Chriſt*'s Name, le us all be better adviſed, and perſwaded to accept of a *Saviour*. Why ſhould we wear out our Bodies, and beat our Brains, and loſe our Souls, in carping and toiling Night and Day, for *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit?* Why ſhould we ſuffer ſo many vain Sorrows to overwhelm us? Why ſhould we ſit fretting and chafing becauſe our Condition is not ſuitable to our Deſires? We ſee here before us a ſovereign Remedy for all Diſeaſes, a compendious Way to be eaſed at once of all Troubles. *Come unto Chriſt*, and all our ſorrowful Days are at an End. Let us then in good Earneſt reſolutely bid adieu to all our ſinful Luſts, and empty Delights, our carnal Deſires and proud Thoughts, and come to *Chriſt*, and we are ſafe.

§. II. 2. Now in the *laſt* Place, if there be among us any *weak* and *faint-hearted Chriſtians*, that long for nothing more than the Happineſs to be *Chriſt*'s

Diſciples, but have ſuch a low Opinion of themſelves, as that they count themſelves too unworthy to be admitted into that holy ſociety: the Word of Comfort, and Encouragement belongeth unto them eſpecially.

Some poor Souls are always ſpeaking Terror and Affliction to themſelves, and think ſo much what themſelves are, that they cannot well conſider what Chriſt is. Alas, ſaith one, I am ſo foul all over, ſo deformed by my Sins, that I am aſhamed to look towards Heaven. I am ſo vile a Sinner, a Sinner of ſo long ſtanding, I have loſt ſo much Time, and deſpiſed ſo much Grace, and committed ſo many Sins, that I dare not come, or hope that there can be any Reſt for me.

To ſuch I ſhall ſay, Conſider well what Manner of Perſons they be whom *Chriſt* inviteth, and then ſee if you do not find yourſelves among them. Are you indeed ſenſible, that you are moſt vile Sinners? And are you really aſhamed of yourſelves? Have you a hearty Deſire to be made better, and to do better for the remaining Part of your Life? Would you not only have a *Pardon* for your *Sins*, but *Grace* to make you *holy*, and enable you to ſerve and honour the

holy

holy God? Be no more afraid, you are the Perſons *Chriſt* calleth unto, you may come and be welcome. You are in a ſpecial Manner to be encouraged, *leſt you be ſwalled up of overmuch Grief.* 2 Cor. ii. 7. The Miniſters of *Chriſt* are ſent forth with Commiſſion *to comfort the Feeble-minded, and to ſupport the Weak.* 1 Theſ. v. 14. As the *Father* ſent *Chriſt*, ſo hath Chriſt ſent his Miniſters, to call Sinners, loſt Sinners, the very worſt of Sinners, to *Repentance.* They therefore can very confidently ſay to all ſuch as you are, as thoſe did to blind *Bartimeus. Mar.* x. 49. *Be of good Comfort, riſe, he calleth you.* What Reaſon can ſuch as you have to fear? Hath not *God*, from the very Beginning, manifeſted to the World the Goodneſs of his Nature, and his Forwardneſs to ſhew Mercy? *He is good to all, and his Mercy is over all his Works.* Pſal. xiv. 5. *His Mercy endureth for ever.* Shew yourſelves where he hath excepted *you*, when he ſaith he is good to *all. Chriſt* hath purchaſed a Pardon, and commanded, that Repentance, and Remiſſion of Sins, be preached to all Nations in his Name: Shew then where you are

excluded from this Mercy. If you cannot ſhew this, what Reaſon can you have to exclude yourſelves? How many *Devils* did he caſt out of *Mary Magdalen?* Suppoſe as many in you, is he now either leſs able, or leſs willing to caſt them all out? How many *Publicans* and *Sinners* did he freely converſe with, and kindly receive, even to the Leſſening of his own Reputation, with a cenſorious Generation of People? Suppoſe yourſelves as bad as the worſt of them, hath he not told you, that whoſoever cometh to him he will in no wiſe caſt out? Think upon a blaſpheming and perſecuting *Saul*, and ſee what Reaſon you can have to doubt of Acceptance upon your Converſion. You have heard what Joy there is in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth. You have read *God* likening himſelf unto a Man, that to ſeek one Sheep of an Hundred, that was gone aſtray, left the Ninety and Nine in the Wilderneſs, till he found it; and rejoiced more at the Finding of it, than in all the reſt: And again, to a tender *Father*, haſting forth to meet, embracing, kiſſing, for very Joy weeping over, cloathing, feaſting his prodigal Child,

exhauſted

exhauſted with riotous living, when he, in his great Want, pinched by Neceſſity and Hunger, returned unto him. *Luke* xv. Have you not heard his Promiſe, that though our Sins be as Scarlet, he will make us as white as Wool? Hath he not aſſured us, *that if the Wicked will turn from all his Sins that he hath committed, and keep all his Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he ſhall ſurely live, he ſhall not die. All his Tranſgreſſions, that he hath committed, ſhall not be mentioned unto him.* Ezek. xviii. 21, 22.

§. III. *Diſpute* then no longer againſt *God*'s Goodneſs and your own Souls, whilſt *God* uſeth all Means to encourage you and give you Hope; but rather obſerve and beware of the wicked Cunning of our malicious Adverſary the *Devil*, and ſee what a Maſter Men ſerve, whilſt they give Ear to his Temptations and Suggeſtions. His *firſt* Work is to blind Men ſo, as they ſhall diſcern no Danger before them, and then he puſheth them forward into Preſumption, and a moſt unreaſonable Courage to diſobey *God*, and ſin. His *next* Work is, by the Sweetneſs and Pleaſures of Sin, to caſt

them into a deep Sleep of Inconſideration and Security, and to fill them with delightful Dreams of Peace and Safety; and to keep them, by any Means he can invent, inſenſible of the Wounds they have received, leſt the Smart ſhould awake them, and bring them to themſelves again, and they ſhould begin to think of returning to *God*. He loads Men firſt, and then contrives Ways of keeping them inſenſible of the Weight, and, by all his Wiles, diverts them from all ſerious Thoughts of their wretched Condition, into which he hath tempted them. Now, if he can hold them here (and they are not a few that he keepeth thus ſecure and regardleſs of their Souls, even all their Days) then he hath them ſure enough; they ſport and play with Sin, and make a Mock of it; they laugh at, or are angry with all their Friends that pity them, and tell them of their Load, whilſt they feel it not; they follow their Leader merrily and jovially to Deſtruction, and are rarely diſturbed with any Check from their own Conſciences. But if now it ſhall pleaſe God, by any Act of his Providence, a little to awake them, and they once but begin to lift up their Eyes, and look about them,

them, and ſee all the Dangers in the Midſt whereof he hath ſet them, *then* his chief Buſineſs is to load their Souls with ſad Fears and Doubtings, that there is no Way to eſcape, that they are ſo far gone, that there is no Hope at all of Recovery; and now is his Seaſon of ſuggeſting to them black Thoughts of *God* and *Jeſus Chriſt*, and then to ſet home theſe very Suggeſtions of his own, with that Force upon their Conſciences, that they ſhall conclude their Sins to be unpardonable, and that it is now too late to repent; that the Day of Grace is over, that they have ſinned too much, and too long to be forgiven; that there is no thinking now of coming unto *Chriſt* for Reſt: He driveth them paſt all Hope, and ſinketh them down into Deſpair, with ſuch ſad Thoughts as theſe; and perſwadeth them it is as good to ſtay where they are, as to trouble themſelves farther to no Purpoſe. Be not therefore, if you regard your Happineſs, any longer ignorant of his Devices; neither be allured by his Flatteries, to ſerve him any longer in Sin, to your own Deſtruction; nor terrified by his falſe Suggeſtions, from coming unto *Chriſt* for your Salvation. Let him neither hire you by

the Pleaſures and Profits of Sin, to carry that foul and heavy Load any longer with Patience; nor perſwade you to lie down by the Way, ſighing and groaning under it, when *Chriſt* calleth you to Reſt.

§. IV. If you be now thus far ſatisfied, that *Satan* deſigneth you nothing but Miſchief, and *Chriſt* intendeth you all that is good: If you be convinced that the Way is yet open, and you may come; let nothing hinder you, but come with all Reſolution, Alacrity, and Speed. Are you unworthy to come to *Chriſt?* He very well knew that before he called you, and would not have called you, if that muſt neceſſarily hinder you. Whom muſt he invite, if not the Unworthy? Your Senſe of your own Unworthineſs, your Deſire to be more worthy, your applying yourſelves to him, for his Grace to make you ſo, your Obedience to his Call and Command, is all the Worthineſs he expecteth. Want you Strength to come? He knoweth that as well, and what his own Strength can do in your Weakneſs. He that calleth you is ready to ſtrengthen you; and though of yourſelves you can

can do nothing, yet may you *do all Things through Christ that ſtrengtheneth you*, Phil. iv. 13. Are you *willing?* There is your *Strength*. Think it not reaſonable to plead your Want of *Strength*, whilſt you find in yourſelves a Want of *Will*; and when you find no Want of *Will*, you ſhall find no Cauſe to complain of your Want of *Strength*. *Chriſt* biddeth you only do what you *can*, and truſt to *him* for what you *cannot* do. Make Uſe of all the Strength you have, call upon him in fervent Prayer for more, and then rely upon *his* Strength, and not your *own*.

Do Multitudes of Buſineſſes interrupt and hinder you? Caſt but off all that is too much, which it is moſt reaſonable to do, and you ſhall have little enough. What is moderate and needful can be no Hinderance, and what is ſuperfluous neither needs, nor ought to be ſo. Is your Buſineſs *ſinful* and *diſhoneſt?* Away with it, it is no Work of *yours*, but a Drudgery the *Devil* would put you to: Is it *needful* and *honeſt?* It is your Work and Duty, it is a Taſk that *Chriſt* hath ſet you, and cannot hinder you from coming to him. It is that which muſt employ you in the Way to Heaven, and keep

keep you too buſy for the *Devil*, ſo that he cannot find you at Leiſure to hearken to him.

Is there a *Croſs* in the Way, Poverty and Diſgrace, and many Afflictions grievous to be borne, many Severities and hard Duties, unwelcome to the Fleſh? Is the *Gate ſtrait*, and the *Way narrow*, and the *Company little?* It may be ſo indeed altogether, and it muſt be ſo in ſome Meaſure; and then, if theſe Things affright us, we may, if we pleaſe, ſit ſtill, and famiſh, and die; and what ſhall we get by all this fooliſh Pity we have for ourſelves? Will not this *Croſs* bring you to a *Crown?* Will not this *Poverty* fit you for the durable *Riches*, Treaſures in Heaven? Will not *this light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory?* 2 Cor. iv. 17. Hath not Chriſt aſſured us, that *if we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him?* Rom. viii. 17. 2 Tim. ii. 12.

They that are apt to affright themſelves from *Chriſt* with the Thoughts of the Sufferings and Hardſhips in their Way, which they fear they ſhall never be able to ſtruggle through, ſhould do well to conſider, beſides the glorious Reward,

Reward, which is enough to animate them with Courage againſt the very worſt Things they can fear, and the Promiſe of Succeſs and Victory to all that fight in Earneſt, theſe few Things. *Firſt*, Do not Men ſuffer often as bitter Things, and perform as hard Taſks, and undergo as weariſome Labours, and run as many Hazards of what in the World they moſt value, even of Health and Life, for Things of very ſmall Worth here in Earth? And is not *God* and *Heaven*, for which we come to *Chriſt*, worth as much? *Secondly*, Remember that theſe Sufferings, we ſo much fear, are not certain, nor always the Lot of every *Chriſtian*; the *Croſs* is only then to be taken up, and borne, when it lieth in our Way; but it lieth not always there, nor to all. Such Things may happen, and they may not, as *God* ſeeth it good; and thus it is in all other Things we can go about. *Thirdly*, when *God* calleth to Sufferings, we have all the Advantages of others; we have Warning before-hand, and are bid to expect them, and be ready for them; not becauſe they will certainly come, but that if they come, they may, by our Prepa-

ration,

ration, fall the lighter on us; and we are bid to ſuffer with Patience and Courage, becauſe that will make them eaſier, and tolerable, which otherwiſe they would not be. Evils, whenever they come, muſt be borne, whether we be willing, or not; and Impatience always maketh them heavier, and worſe, and the Comfort is none at all. So thoſe *Chriſtian* Duties which we think ſo hard, are only hard to them that underſtand them not, and have not learned them. And what is not ſo? They are hard awhile at the Beginning, to Novices; as we grow more perfect, they grow more eaſy, and, in Time, very pleaſant. *Next*, that *Fleſh* and *Blood*, to which theſe Things are grievous, is that *which ſhall not enter the Kingdom of God.* 1 Cor. xv. 50. And this Way, how rough and thorny ſoever, is the Way to endleſs Delights, and the ſtrait Gate, the Entrance into a glorious Heaven.

Conſider all this ſeriouſly, and then remember what Coſt and Pains you have been at already, to purchaſe meer Trifles; how often and long you have laboured and ſweat for juſt nothing, for what hath yielded you no Satisfaction at all; and then you cannot think it an uneaſy Taſk to come to *Chriſt* for Eaſe and Refreſhment, though you muſt be at ſome Pains in ſo doing. §. V.

§. V. There is yet one Thing ſpoken of already, which it is fit here to mind you of again, your Comfort and Encouragement dependeth ſo much upon it. Be ſure that you be truly weary of your Load of Sin. This you may think a needleſs Caution; you are ſo weary of it, you ſay, that herein lieth all your Trouble; you are weary, but can find no Eaſe. But there may be a Miſtake, and you may be reſtleſly weary, and not truly weary of Sin. It is not a being very weary of ſome particular Sins that will prepare you for Reſt. You may be weary of ſome Sins, becauſe they are burdenſome to your natural Conſtitution and Temper; or becauſe you find them Enemies to your bodily Health, or your worldly Intereſts, or your Reputation among Men: They ſuit not, it may be, with your Safety, or your Eaſe. It may be, they rob your Families, and eat the Bread out of your Children's Mouths; or they diſpleaſe your Relations and Friends, on whoſe Love and Favour you have ſome Dependance; or, it may be, they croſs ſome other more powerful Luſt, or predominant Affection to ſome other Sin, as bad, or worſe. Many Perſons

Perſons may, for ſuch Cauſes as theſe, be very weary of many Sins, and perfectly hate them, and reſiſt all Temptations to them, and yet not be truly weary of Sin. A lazy Man, that loveth his Eaſe and Quiet, is quickly weary of all Strife and Contention, or any other Sin that createth him Pains and Trouble. A ſickly Man will ſoon be weary of Gluttonny, Drunkenneſs, and Whoredom, or any other Sin, which he feels apt to make him more ſickly. An ambitious and popular Man may be weary of Niggardlineſs and Baſeneſs, or whatever leſſeneth his Eſteem and Reputation with Men, and is inconſiſtent with his ambitious Deſigns. The covetous Perſon hateth Luxury and Rioting, and every Sin that is coſtly and expenſive. The timorous are weary of ſuch Sins as are ſeverely puniſhable by the Laws; and the baſhful, of all Sins, as well as Virtues, that are not in Faſhion. Now all theſe are in Love ſtill with ſome Sins, for the very ſame Reaſon for which they hate others. And, indeed, are diſpleaſed with ſome only, becauſe they would hinder them from a more full Enjoyment of thoſe they love beſt. They are weary of Sin for Sin's ſake, but of no

Sin,

Sin, purely for God's Sake, whom they cannot truly love and honour, without forſaking every Sin. The good Man muſt *hate every evil Way*. Pſal. cxix. 104. And it is not this or that Sin, but Sin in general, we muſt be weary of; and ſo thoſe of which we are naturally apt to be fondeſt, will find no more Favour than the reſt; nay, of them we will be moſt weary, becauſe they ſtick cloſeſt to us, and moſt moleſt us in our Way to *Chriſt*.

Again: We are weary, it may be, of the outward Acts of Sin, and are very careful not to be guilty of any of them, whether they be Acts of Impiety, Injuſtice, or Intemperance, and we may be perſwaded to this by many Motives: But if we be truly weary of Sin, we are alſo as weary of the inward Corruption of the Heart, of every Inclination of the Soul unto Evil, of all the ſpiritual Wants that we find in ourſelves; Want of the true Love of God, the Coldneſs and weak Degrees of Love; Want of Humility and the Fear of God. We muſt be weary of our Slowneſs and Backwardneſs to Duty, of our many Omiſſions, and Neglects, and Averſions of Heart from Prayer, and holy Meditation,

tion, and Self-examination, and Improving in Knowledge, and governing our Paſſions, and doing Good, all the Good that is in our Power to do. Weary we ſhould be of all our idle and vain Thoughts, and not be eaſy 'till we can more mortify our Luſts, and tame our Fleſh, and bring our whole Man to a more free, and willing, and univerſal Compliance with, and Conformity to the Will of *God*.

We muſt therefore take heed that we be not weary of Sin only, becauſe of the Fear of Evils that attend it, as the Rod of Correction or Chaſtiſement, whereby we ſometimes are made to ſmart for it, and the tormenting Thoughts of future Judgement and Puniſhment, which often make us ſad and melancholy, and to tremble with *Felix*. The Checks and ſecret Rebukes of our awakened Conſciences may be very troubleſome to us, becauſe they interrupt our Mirth, and break our Sleep; and we are weary, not of the Sin, but of the Senſe of Sin; and our Deſire is not ſo much to be free from it, as from the Trouble of it; *that is*, we could ſtill be content to ſin, and diſhonour *God*, ſo we could do it quietly, and not torment ourſelves. This we muſt make ſure of, that it is

Sin,

Sin, all that is filthy and odious to *God*, and unworthy of the Nature *God* hath given us, that we are weary of. However, we may be weary of Sin for other Reaſons, as indeed there are innumerable Reaſons why we ſhould be weary of it, and hate it; yet, if it be not chiefly for this, that it is againſt the Honour and Will of God, we are not weary of it to the Purpoſe. *Ye that love the Lord, hate Evil.* Pſal. xcvii. 10. Let the *love* we have for *God* beget in us the *Hatred* of Sin, and all will be well.

Here indeed is the true Cauſe why ſo few come unto *Chriſt*. Either we do not conſider, 'till we be fully convinced that we are ſo great Sinners as indeed we are, or we do not underſtand the Nature of Sin ſo well, as to think it ſo odious to *God*, ſo contrary to his holy Nature, and ſo inconſiſtent with his Honour, as indeed it is; or we have not learned to *love God* ſo well, as to abhor every Thing that is diſpleaſing to him; and hence we are not weary of Sin at all for *his* Sake, but merely for our *own*. Let us but once be brought to this, to have a due *Eſteem* of *God*, and a *Love* to him, as the *chief Good*, and Fountain of Goodneſs, and be deſirous to part with

with every Thing that is offenſive to him, and hindereth us from honouring him, and enjoying him, and we ſhall eaſily be perſwaded to accept him, offering himſelf unto us in *Chriſt Jeſus*, as our only and perfect Happineſs. We ſhall thus conclude all Diſputes. *God* is an infinite Good; he made us to communicate of his Goodneſs unto us; 'tis nothing but Sin makes us ſhare ſo little in his Goodneſs, it is *Chriſt Jeſus* alone that can free us from this Sin; he calleth us to himſelf to this End, that being freed from Sin, we may both love and enjoy *God*, and all *Goodneſs* in him; to him therefore we will come, that reſting from Sin, we may reſt in the Fulneſs of Goodneſs for evermore.

§. VI. But yet we ſometimes hear diſconſolate *Chriſtians* thus complaining of themſelves. We find ourſelves fully convinced of the infinite *Goodneſs* of *God*, and both of the *Sufficiency* and *Willingneſs* of *Chriſt* to ſave Men from their Sins. We are ſatisfied that we are grievous Sinners, and have great Need of ſuch a *Saviour*; and are ſo weary of our Sins, becauſe we diſhonour *God* by them, that we would give all that we have

have to be freed from them; yea, we would willingly die any the bittereſt Death juſt now, ſo we might be aſſured that *God is our God*, and *Chriſt our Saviour*, and all our Sins taken away, that we might for ever perfectly love and honour *God*. We labour all we can to *come* unto *Chriſt* to this Purpoſe, that we may be ſet free from this Burden that ſo oppreſſeth us, that we cannot ſerve and honour *God* as we deſire to do. And for this we have no Quiet in our Hearts, Night nor Day, becauſe we feel Sin ſtill in ourſelves, and becauſe we can love God no better, nor make any more Progreſs in the Ways of Chriſt, than yet we do. We would do any Thing, or ſuffer any Thing in the World, ſo we might honour God in obeying Chriſt, whom we ſo firmly believe to be the Saviour of Sinners, that we have no Hope in any other, and we are deſirous, above all Things, to be wholly at his Command; and our great Trouble is, that we find not that we are ſo: *We find Sin yet alive and buſy in us, and we find Temptations to be very many and ſtrong; and we farther find, that we perform all our Duties very faintly, and with little Comfort or Satisfaction to our Souls,*

and

and we are not ſenſible that we grow in Grace. We are full of Doubts and Fears, and cannot perſwade ourſelves that we are ſuch as Chriſt will accept; and theſe are increaſed by this, that God often afflicteth us, and ſeemeth to be angry with us, and not to hear our Prayers, whilſt he giveth not that Strength to ſerve him, nor Comfort in ſerving him, which we pray for. And for theſe Things we find no Reſt to our Souls.

Here is indeed a ſad Complaint, but the *beſt* of it is, it uſually cometh from a *good Heart*, and few thus complain, but they who have leaſt Cauſe to complain; and the *worſt* of it is, that we hear it no oftner, and there be too few that come to ſuch a Senſe of their own Unworthineſs and Weakneſs, and ſo reſtleſs a Deſire of pleaſing *God* by their Subjection to *Chriſt*. How few, among all thoſe who are ſo full of daily Complaints, find we complaining of their Want of Grace and Goodneſs, or of their own deceitful Hearts, or of the little Reſt their Sins give them? What a welcome Taſk would it be to the *Miniſters* of *Chriſt* to be always preparing or adminiſtring Cordials, to chear up thoſe that are going with what Speed they can towards *Chriſt*, though

though they feel their own Weakneſs, and ſome Faintings by the Way? To be always engaged in comforting, would be a comfortable Work indeed. But, alas, *Chriſt*'s Miniſters have too little of this; their greateſt and hardeſt Taſk is to awake thoſe that are aſleep, and to perſwade them to riſe and come out of Bed, when their Houſes are all on a Flame round about them: Their almoſt conſtant Work is to diſturb that Reſt and Quiet which *Satan* and themſelves do make; and though they do, as they are bid, to this Purpoſe, *lift up their Voices like a Trumpet, ſound* the Alarm daily, to warn them of the approaching Danger; though they reprove never ſo ſharply and cuttingly, to bring them to ſome Senſe and Feeling, that they may be found in the Faith; yet how few can they get ſo much as to open their Eyes, and ſee either their Danger, or the Way to eſcape it? So that whenſoever the Subject before them would lead them to ſpeak Comfort to the *diſconſolate Chriſtian*, they are checked by their own Fears, leſt they ſhould labour in vain, and ſpeak to No-body; ſo few can they find, who ſeem, by the Senſe and Sorrow they ſhew for Sin, to need a Comforter.

§. VII.

§. VII. However, if happily there be but one of a Thouſand from whom their Senſe of Sin forceth out ſuch a Complaint, or whoſe Modeſty alloweth them not ſo to attempt their own Eaſe and Satisfaction, by a ſeaſonable Diſcovery of their Troubles with the true Ground of them, to the Guides of their Souls, it is very fit they ſhould not want that Portion which properly belongs unto them: Therefore unto them is ſaid that which here followeth.

1. Let ſuch as thus complain, take heed that they do not deceive themſelves in their preſent Caſe, but that they be really ſuch as they pretend. See that you be weary of Sin indeed, and quite out of Love with it. When you ſay you would do any Thing, or ſuffer any Thing, and even die to be freed from it, ſee that you be in good Earneſt, and that by Sin, you mean all Sin, and then a very great Part of your Work is done, whether you think it ſo or not. But be ſure that there be no little (as you may eſteem it) Boſom-Sin that you yet retain an Affection for. There is often ſome ſuch lurking Sin, which Men are not willing to ſee or acknowledge to be ſo, much

much leſs can think it needful to mortify, which ſtandeth in their Way to comfort. *All theſe Things have I kept from my Youth up, ſaid* that confident *young Man* to *Chriſt, but yet there was one Thing*, and that a very conſiderable one, *lacking*, which kept him from *Chriſt*, Luke viii. 22. *and he went away ſorrowful*, rather than have his *Saviour* on ſuch Terms; he would be without *him*, though with *Sorrow*, rather than have that one Thing with him. See then if there be not a proud Spirit to be taken down, a luſtful or an envious Eye to be plucked out, a griping Hand to be cut off, a prating, backbiting, cenſorious, or Some Way overbuſy Tongue to be tamed, or ſomething of like Nature in the Way; too much Pride or Curioſity, too much Worldlineſs, or too little ſelf-denial, or Love to Enemies; too little Care of doing all the Good that might be done, and Unwillingneſs to ſell all, and give to the Poor; Want of a through Humiliation, Self-abaſement; and that God ſeeth Cauſe to humble you yet more, and not to give you any Reſt or Comfort in yourſelves, leſt you ſhould give over the Search into your own Hearts too ſoon, and ſuffer ſome Sin to live and reign. Search narrowly

therefore, and ſee if there be not ſome bitter Herb ſuffered to grow, which marreth the Reliſh of all you receive from *God*, and do to *God*. Be very impartial with yourſelves in this Particular.

2. See that in good Earneſt you have intirely, and without any ſecret Reſervation, *reſigned* yourſelves to *Chriſt*. See that you be indeed gone from Home, and out of yourſelves, to come unto *Chriſt*; that you are become ſo wholly *his*, that you are no longer *your own*, any farther than you have his Leave; that his Will be your Will, and that all your Inquiry is this, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* That you do not go about to make Terms of your own with *Chriſt*, but thankfully accept of his. *Chriſt* muſt either be acknowledged an abſolute Sovereign, or you cannot enjoy the Privileges of his Subjects. His Will muſt be your Law, and there muſt need no more, but the Manifeſtation of it, to create the ſtrongeſt Obligation: Your Conſent is required as a Duty, and you may chuſe indeed whether you will conſent or not; but it is at your Peril, and a partial Conſent will be interpreted to be none. Let there be therefore ſuch an abſolute Reſignation of yourſelves unto

unto him, that you be content to be wholly at his Diſpoſal, let him do what he will with you in this World, to want your own Will, and whatever you naturally moſt love, if he ſay you ſhall. If then you can, be ſatisfied to know his Command and do it, without aſking Queſtions what you ſhall in this Life gain or loſe by it; and be ſo well pleaſed with his ordering all the Affairs of the World, that whether it ſeem to your Advantage or Diſadvantage, you conclude all is well and for the beſt, thus you behave yourſelves as *Chriſtians*. It is Mens failing in this main Point, and *reſigning by Halves* unto *Chriſt*, that createth them moſt of their Trouble, and God ſeeth it good to exerciſe them, and hold them under the Rod, till they learn this Leſſon more perfectly. But now if you find, upon the impartial Examination of your own Hearts, that you cheriſh no beloved Sin, nor indulge yourſelf in the Omiſſion of any known Duty, and that you have abſolutely and unreſervedly given yourſelves up to *Chriſt*, and willingly truſt all your Concerns to him, reſting fully ſatisfied with all that ever he doth: Then,

3. You muſt alſo conſider where you yet are, and what the Condition of the Beſt will be in this Life. Though all this be really done by you, yet it is ſtill done but imperfectly, and cannot be otherwiſe whilſt we are in the Way, and we ſee and know but in Part. And as we ſhall eaſily find this to be true, ſo we muſt learn alſo, that the Bleſſings promiſed by *Chriſt*, and hoped for by us, are really ſure, and ſhall be performed in due Time, and yet not all at once, and by what Degrees in this Life we are uncertain, and muſt leave it to him that hath promiſed. *God* hath not any where promiſed to turn *Earth* into *Heaven* for us, nor to give us the Perfection of Bleſſedneſs before we die; and whilſt we are in a State of Imperfection we muſt want ſomething. And therefore, as you muſt take heed that you fail not in your Duty wilfully, and yet muſt not be diſcouraged with the Senſe of ſome Imperfection in Duty: So you muſt alſo take heed you diſtruſt not the Promiſes, nor be out of Hope becauſe they are not yet completely performed.

§. VIII. The Original of moſt of thoſe Troubles of Mind wherewith ſincere Chriſtians are afflicted, ariſe from one of

of theſe Miſtakes. *Either they imagine God requireth more at their Hands than he doth require, or elſe that he promiſeth more than he doth indeed promiſe.*

1. Many *timorous* Souls are apt to think that *God requireth much more of them than indeed he doth*; and then finding how far they fall ſhort of what they ſuppoſe is required, they conclude their Condition very deſperate, and can find no Comfort or Reſt. But this we ſhould learn to underſtand, that there is much more due to God from Man, than God is now pleaſed indiſpenſibly to require of Man; or that God will accept of a great deal leſs than is his Due. There can be no leſs due to God than a *perfect Obedience*, nor are we to abate ourſelves any Thing of it in our Endeavours; we muſt do all we can to render unto *God* the whole Honour due unto his Name. Yet is *God* pleaſed, in Conſideration of the Merits of his *Son* to accept of much leſs than this, and maketh many Abatements in his Acceptance, which we are not to make in our Endeavours. As we are *Men*, the Law of Works given to our Father *Adam* ſheweth us our Duty, and we are not to diſown it. As we are *Sinners*, we are under an Impoſſibility to

fulfill it, and for that without a Saviour miſerable; but as we are *Chriſtians*, and adopted the Children of *God* in the *ſecond Adam Jeſus Chriſt*, we are under a Law of Grace, and a Pardon is offered for our Tranſgreſſion of that firſt Law, upon Condition of Faith in *Chriſt*; on this we may ſafely rely, as long as the *Spirit* is *willing*, though the *Fleſh* be *weak*. The Imperfection therefore of Duty muſt never diſcourage us, ſo long as we find in ourſelves that Sincerity of Heart, which is now acceptable through *Jeſus Chriſt*. To him we muſt come, that's a Duty which will never be diſpenſed with, for the Omiſſion of this there can be no Pardon, except we could find another *Saviour* and another *Goſpel*. And in the Ways that he hath ſhewn us we muſt walk even unto the End: But here's our Comfort, that whilſt we walk *willingly* and *reſolvedly*, though there be much *halting*, yea, and ſome *Fallings* too, yet we may come ſafe to our Journey's End, and find a joyful Welcome in the End. We muſt neceſſarily come unto *Chriſt*, we muſt be as careful as we can that we fall not into any Sin, we muſt put forth all the Strength we have to walk uprightly in every Duty, we muſt uſe

all

all the Means that *Chriſt* hath ordained to ſtrengthen ourſelves more, and this is that which is now required: But if, notwithſtanding all our Endeavours, we are weak, and halt, and ſometimes fall, yet riſe, again and go on with what Care and Speed we can, all will be well in the End, and Chriſt will give us Reſt.

2. Many *miſtaken Chriſtians* ſuppoſe that *God* hath promiſed that which he hath not promiſed, or they do not underſtand the Terms of his Promiſes; and when they miſs what upon a Miſtake of God's Promiſes they expected to find, and yet believe that God is faithful, and will certainly perform all that he hath promiſed, they refuſe to be comforted, concluding that the Promiſes do not belong to them, and that they do not perform the Conditions on which the Promiſe as to its Fulfilling depends. Thus *Reſt* is promiſed to all that *come* unto *Chriſt*, or *believe* in him, and they miſtaking the Nature of this *Reſt*, and not finding ſuch a *Reſt* as they expected, conclude againſt themſelves, that they, are no *Believers*. Now you ought to conſider, that though *Reſt* be promiſed, and though it ſhall certainly be given, as it is promiſed to all true *Believers*, yet

is it not all Kinds of Reſt, nor to be given all at once, nor to be enjoyed always, nor at all Times alike. You muſt allow God to perform his Promiſe in what Meaſure, by what Degrees, after what Manner, and at what Time it ſeemeth beſt to him, and muſt make yourſelves ſure of this, that he will fully make good his Word, and all that wait with Patience to the End ſhall find it ſo, and this ſhould ſatisfy.

§. IX. That this may be applied to your Caſe, conſider what it is that you complain of.

1. You ſay *you find Sin alive and buſy in you, and becauſe of this you have no Reſt; and becauſe you have not a total Reſt from Sin, you are not come to Chriſt.* But where do you find, either, *firſt*, that *God* doth now expect, that either you or any Man elſe ſhould be without Sin, or that he hath promiſed that by coming unto *Chriſt* you ſhould in this Life have ſuch a Reſt from all Sin? Or where hath Chriſt promiſed that Sin ſhall no longer live in you or living, that it ſhall not be buſy, and work in you? Now if it be in you and work, it is your Duty to feel it, and to be humbled by it, and

to

to fight againſt it ; did you not ſo, you were in a worſe Condition, without all ſpiritual Life, dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins ; and if you do ſo, it muſt diſturb your *Reſt*. The *Law of Innocence* commandeth to be without Sin, and finding you are not ſo, it muſt make you appear vile in your own Sight. *The Law of Grace* commandeth that you be not Servants to Sin, and ſuch you are not, ſo long as you do not willingly obey it: *His Servants ye are whom ye obey*. Rom. vi. 16. Whilſt the Fleſh liveth, the Luſt of the Fleſh will in ſome Meaſure live too, yea, and war in our Members againſt the Spirit. Whilſt it liveth in us, it is diſpleaſing to God, and therefore muſt it be heavy to us It is indeed the Work of Grace to mortify theſe fleſhly Luſts, to weaken them daily more and more, and keep them under, that they get not the Maſtery, nor rule over us. But they will not be quite dead till we die, and the more burdenſome the Senſe of them is now to us, the more muſt we labour to ſubdue them, and to ſtarve them out, by withdrawing their Food and Nouriſhment, *making no Proviſion them*. Rom. .xiii. ult. *Let us not obey Sin in the Luſts thereof*. Rom. vi. 12. But

miſtake not the *Reſt* that you have here by *Chriſt*; it is not a Reſt from the *Strugglings* of Sin, but from the *Dominion* of it; not from its working in us, but from our drudging for it; from *yielding our Members as Inſtruments of Unrighteouſneſs unto Sin.* Ver. 13. We are at Reſt from ſerving it, not from reſiſting it; and we cannot expect to reſt wholly, whilſt we have ſuch a buſy Enemy to reſiſt. *He that is born of God* indeed, *ſinneth not*, 1 John v. 18. yieldeth not gently to it, but maketh ſtrong Reſiſtance againſt it. See then, that it win not the Heart, nor enthrone itſelf there; but, as an hated Tyrant, uſurping the Right of your legal Prince, oppoſe it to the Death, and you are ſafe.

2. You ſay, in the *next* Place, *that you are aſſaulted with ſtrong Temptations, and can have little Reſt or Quiet for them.* Hath *Chriſt* promiſed that when you are once *Chriſtians*, there ſhall be no more any *Devil* to tempt you, any *World* for him to tempt you with, any *Fleſh* to be tempted? Or hath he any where made it the *Chriſtian's Duty* to be free from Temptations, or intimated, that all *Satan's* Temptations ſhall be charged upon you as your Sin? Was *Chriſt* himſelf free from

from Temptations, the ſtrongeſt Temptations? Or was he leſs *innocent*, becauſe he was ſo tempted of the *Devil?* And having been tempted, doth he not know how to pity and *ſuccour thoſe that are tempted?* Heb. ii. 18. He was *tempted like as we are, yet without Sin.* Heb. iv. 15. And having vanquiſhed the Tempter himſelf, hath promiſed to *make a Way for us to eſcape*, 1 Cor. x. 13. He hath bid us do as he did, and hath encouraged us with a Promiſe of like Succeſs, *Reſiſt the Devil, and he will flee from you.* Jam. iv. 7. He hath told us how to defend ourſelves againſt him with an impenetrable Shield, even the *Shield of Faith, wherewith ye may be able to quench all the fiery Darts of the Wicked.* Eph. vi. 16. The *Devil*'s Malice againſt you is as great as ever; and the better you are, the more will his Malice encreaſe; and be ſure, the more malicious he is againſt you, the more he will beſtir himſelf to vex and ruin you. Malice is buſy and active to its Power, but his Power is cut ſhort, and you have a Promiſe of *more Grace*, 1 Cor. xii. 9. Jam. iv. 6. He can do beſt, and you can do more. It doth not become you to ſtand complaining of a weakened Adverſary, when you may have Strength

and

and Aſſiſtance enough for the Victory. The Serpent's Head is bruiſed, but he is not quite killed as yet, nor always chained up. Yield not to him, diſpute not with him; tell him, in ſhort, *thus it is written, Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve*, and then ſay boldly in the Name of *Chriſt*, *Get thee hence, Satan*, and you are ſafe.

3. But yet, you go *heavily and drouſily after Chriſt*; *all your Duties are done with much Dullneſs*; *your Prayers and Devotions are cold, flat, and lifeleſs, and your Affections are ſlow and ſluggiſh.* It is very poſſible, if you be a *Chriſtian* indeed, your *Humility*, and mean Thoughts of yourſelves, and all your Performances, may make you judge amiſs of yourſelves. Humility is a Grace which maketh a Man little and vile in his own Eyes, and unable to ſee that in himſelf which other Men often do, and God always ſeeth and liketh. But ſuppoſe it be in Part as you ſay, it is a Fault and Imperfection, which, when diſcerned, muſt humble you more, and make you ſtrive with all your Might to amend it. Stand not therefore complaining of it, but confeſſing it to God, and diſcovering it to

ſuch

ſuch as you think beſt able to direct you, follow good Directions, and pray for a Bleſſing, and do your Endeavour, and wait upon God for what you find wanting. Find out, if you can poſſibly, what is the Cauſe of all this, and do your beſt to remove it. It may be ſome Indiſpoſition and Diſtemper of Body, which a ſkilful *Phyſician* may help you to correct and remove; and if it cannot be helped, your Comfort muſt be, that you find your *Spirit willing, though your Fleſh be weak.* Matt. xxvi. 41. It may be, too great Cares, and Throng of worldly Buſineſſes, oppreſs your Soul, and clog it too much, when it ſhould more vigorouſly aſcend towards *God*; if ſo, complain not without Cauſe, where the Remedy is in your Hand; caſt off all Care and Buſineſs that is ſuperfluous, and that which God hath by his Providence made needful, and your Duty will not much trouble you; do all Things that are your Duty to do with a good Conſcience towards God, and towards Men, and the Teſtimony of your Conſcience in ſo doing, will not damp, but quicken your Devotions. It may be, you ſtand poring too much upon your Sins and Infirmities, and fixing

your

your Eye continually on the dark Side of yourſelf, you overlook the *Graces* wherewith *God* hath adorned you. You think too little on *God*'s Goodneſs, and the Bleſſings which you have already received; and conſidering only what you ſee to humble you, and to mourn for, forget what you have to rejoice in, and to praiſe God for. Think not that Sorrow for Sin is your principal Duty, but it is to make way for rejoicing. The Senſe of your own Vileneſs, is to make you ſet a juſt Value upon *Chriſt*, and the Mercy *God* offereth you in him. Think that *Unthankfulneſs* to *God* for what you have, is as diſpleaſing to him, as *not ſorrowing* for what you have done amiſs. Think but as juſtly of *God*, as gracious and reconciled to penitent Sinners in his *Son*, as you think truly of your own Sinfulneſs and Demerits, and both the Senſe of your own Needs, and the Sight of God's Goodneſs, will inſpirit your Devotions. It may be you ſtrive, by the Length of your Devotions, to out-do your Strength; and if ſo, you muſt abate; a ſhort and fervent Prayer, ſent from an Heart inflamed with Love, and zealous of God's Honour, is always acceptable unto God. It may be, you

have been taught to prize too highly the Devotion of the *Eye* and *Tongue*, and think that only the copious pouring out of many Words and warm Expreſſions, ſuch as, when heard by yourſelves, awake your Affections, and ſo heat them, as to diſtil Tears from your Eyes, is hearty praying. This indeed is *good* in ſome, in others very *deceitful*, and, however, not *neceſſary* in all. When Devotion beginneth rationally at the Heart, and it is the true and genuine Warmth which proceedeth thence, that kindly heateth the Affections, and moveth both the Tongue and Eye, 'tis very good. But the Lamentableneſs of the Tone, and ſad Words, and tragical Expreſſions, may work a more violent Commotion of the Affections in ſome Natures, and make them cozen themſelves with a *ſcenical* Devotion, and think themſelves wholly turned into Piety, whilſt the Heart is ſtill as carnal as ever. A good Heart is not always befriended with a tender and paſſionate Conſtitution, nor a glib Tongue and nimble Expreſſions; it hath often Sighs and Groans which it cannot utter, and can go as readily to God another Way, as through the Mouth and Eye. In ſhort, when

theſe naturally follow the Heart, and come kindly as its Attendants, they are welcome; when they go without it, they are odious; and if they muſt be forced, they are vain and uſeleſs. See therefore to this, that you labour to recompence the Coldneſs of Affection with the Sincerity of Reſolution. Convince yourſelves, that it is your indiſpenſible Duty to honour *God*, in ſuch a Way as he hath commanded, as well as ever you can, and deliberately fix your Reſolution ſo to do, and call upon God to aſſiſt you. With this Reſolution, and real Purpoſe of Heart, ſet upon every Duty, and do it with all your Might; finding and acknowledging your own Weakneſſes, and beſeeching God to give more Strength, truſt to his Acceptance through *Jeſus Chriſt*. Rational Conviction, with a deliberate Reſolution, produce an even, calm, and laſting Devotion, which is not conſumed by its own Heats, but is a reaſonable Service, acceptable to God: When a violent Motion of the Affections, with much Heat of Spirit, and Abundance of Tears, as it may ſuddenly riſe, ſo it may as ſuddenly vaniſh; like a daſhing Shower, or a Flaſh of Lightning, neither of which tend towards Heaven.

Heaven. Let this be your Satisfaction, that your Will is wholly reſolved for Chriſt, and carrieth all your Endeavours the ſame Way.

4. Yet you ſay, *that you grow but ſlowly in Grace and Goodneſs, and make little Progreſs in the Ways of God.* If it be ſo indeed, it is not well, and you muſt mend your Pace. But it may be you grow more than you diſcern, and another can ſee it when you cannot. In bodily Stature a Man perceiveth not how he groweth, but at length he may be convinced he is grown. Our ſpiritual Growth is much more hard to be diſcerned by ourſelves; and though it be our Duty to grow, yet is it not our Duty always to ſee it. He that is in a Boat or Coach may not perceive himſelf to move forward, when they that ſtand by can ſee that he moveth apace, and, in the End, himſelf will find it ſo. As you grow in the true *Knowledge* of *God* and *yourſelves*, you will always have higher Thoughts of *God*, and lower of *yourſelves*; and this is a Part of your ſpiritual Growth, in one of the moſt excellent *Chriſtian* Graces, *Humility*. The more you diſcover *Chriſt*'s Excellency, and your own Need of him, your very longing Deſire

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of enjoying him fully, which is your very Growth in *Love*, the principal Grace, will make you think you have done juſt nothing, till you be perfected by him. The leſs you knew of *God*, the leſs you knew both of your Duty and your Sin, and the more you know of your Duty and Sin, the greater you think your Diſtance from *God*. Your Ignorance made you confident, your Knowledge abateth that Confidence, by diſcovering your Wants. Think not then ſo much of what you have not done, as to diſcourage you from doing what you ought to do. Preſs the more earneſtly forward, that you may attain to what you want. He that runneth in a Race, muſt not waſte his Time in always looking behind him, to ſee how far he hath run, but muſt put forward, and make haſte to come up to the Goal. Do but go on as faſt as you can, and you will find in the End, you are come Home. Uſe now, with all Diligence, the Means of Growth, feed heartily on the Bread of Life, drink freely of the Waters of Comfort, exerciſe conſtantly in the Paths of Righteouſneſs; get into a wholeſome Air, where the freſh Gales and Showers from Heaven may light upon

upon you: and ſhunning the empty Huſks of Sin and Vanity, which nouriſh not, but poiſon, or corrupt; and taking your due Reſt from the Cares and Drudgeries of the World, though you now diſcern it not, you will, at laſt, find you are grown up as high as Heaven.

5. But ſtill *you are perplexed with Fears and Doubts, and how ſhould theſe conſiſt with Reſt, or that Aſſurance which you are told there is in ſaving Faith? Firſt*, Be warned not to indulge too much to your Fears and Doubts, or to feed them with too much muſing on your paſt Life, or your preſent Sins; whereby you both render your Lives uncomfortable to yourſelves, rob God of his chearful Service, and your Souls of the Sweetneſs of all holy Duties, and alſo lay a Stumbling-block in the Way of others, who, by ſeeing ſuch as you ſo much diſquieted in yourſelves, are diſcouraged from entering upon the Religion you profeſs, looking upon it as a melancholy and diſtracting Thing. But if you cannot drive away all ſuch *Fears* and *Doubts*, yet are you not raſhly to conclude ſo ill of yourſelves, as to think you have no *Faith*. Remember what you

you have been told, that *the Faith which juſtifieth, is an hearty embracing of, and Compliance with the Goſpel of Chriſt, as the Rule of your Life, and the Way to Salvation.* Walk then according to it, and be confident that *Chriſt* will be the Saviour of all that do ſo. And this is the *Aſſurance* you ſhould have. Your Buſineſs is to ſee that you thus come unto *Chriſt* in the Way which he in his Goſpel hath commanded you to walk, and then you are to leave it to *Chriſt* to do his own Work, and to give you what he hath promiſed as he ſhall pleaſe, ſo long as you doubt not of his Sufficiency and Faithfulneſs. But, though this Doubt ſhould ſometimes ariſe in you, yet you labour to remove it, and do ſo overcome it, that you verily believe that *God* will, for *Chriſt*'s Sake, have Mercy on all that obey his *Goſpel*; and believing this, you make it the very Buſineſs of your Lives to obey it, you are ſafe enough, and have that *Faith* which is neceſſary to Salvation, though it do not yet fully ſatisfy, you doubt of the Sincerity of it. But this is only to doubt of your own Faithfulneſs to *God*, and not of *God*'s Faithfulneſs in making good his Word to you. If this doubting

ing of your own Faith bring you not to a wretched Careleſſneſs, ſo that you grow remiſs in ſerving *God*, becauſe you deſpair of ſerving him acceptably; if, on the other Hand, it excite you to a greater Care and Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure, all is well, though not ſo well as you could wiſh.

And thus alſo for your *Fears*. Where there is a Poſſibility of ſinning, there is Room for Fear; yea, even for Fear of eternal Damnation. But this Fear may be either moderate, or immoderate; and accordingly is to be dealt with. The moderate Fear of eternal Puniſhment is a Thing that we ought not ſo much as to deſire to be without in this Life; it is an Affection which *God* hath given us, to keep us cautious, and a-loof off from Danger, and to keep us in the Way to Salvation; and *Hell* is prepared, not that we ſhould ſuffer in it, but prevent thoſe Sufferings, by *fearing* it. *Chriſt* himſelf hath warned us, *to fear him that can caſt into Hell*, Luke xii. 5. We muſt fear it, that we may not venture to deſerve it; but *ſtanding*, *take heed leſt we fall*, 1 Cor. x. 12. The immoderate Fear is that which ſo daunts and diſheartens us, ſo diſquiets and diſtracts the

the Soul, that it cannot go on with any Chearfulneſs in the Ways of *God*, having always a diſmal Expectation of Wrath, and leaving too little or no Room for *Hope* to act in. When a Man feareth, all his Religion is to no Purpoſe, and that *God* is always angry with him. *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Phil.* ii. 12. that is your Duty; but do not ſo exceedingly fear and tremble, as to let your Work fall out of your Hands, or not to be able to go about it, that will be your Loſs. *A Promiſe being left of entering into his Reſt, take heed, or fear, leſt any of us come ſhort of it*; Heb. iv. 1. that is the Way to have it; but if we be ſo fearful, as not to venture for it, we muſt come ſhort of it.

6. Laſtly, you ſay, *God layeth many heavy Afflictions upon you, and why would he deal ſo ſeverely with you, if he were not angry and diſpleaſed with you?* But remember you your Duty, and let *God* alone to order his Family. If you behave yourſelves dutifully as his Children, you may be ſure he is in *Chriſt Jeſus*, the Son of his Love, your gracious and reconciled *Father*. *There is no Condemnation for you*

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if you be in Chriſt Jeſus, Rom. viii. 1. *Being juſtified by Faith, you have Peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Rom. v. 1. The great Weight of Sin is taken off, ſo that it ſhall not ſink you to Hell; and will not that ſatisfy you, unleſs *God* will alſo ſtrew your Way to Heaven with Roſes? Is the eternal Inheritance of ſo little Value, that it is not worth a few Sufferings? *Chriſt* hath redeemed you from the *Wrath* of a provoked *God*, but not from the *Rod* of a loving *Father* correcting for Sin. He hath delivered you from the *Torments* of *Rebels*, and the *Death* of *Traitors*, not from the *Chaſtiſement* of *Sons*; from the *unquenchable* fiery Furnace, but not certainly from the *fiery Trial* of Afflictions. He hath aſſured you of the Victory, but not from being wounded. It may be your Lot to enter into *Canaan*, through the *Red-Sea* of your own Blood, to go into Heaven through much Tribulation; but what was a Shower of Stones to St. *Stephen*, when he ſaw Heaven open before him? *Chriſt* hath made your Way to *God paſſable*, is not that enough, except he *ſmooth* it for you too? The Kingdom of Heaven is opened unto all Believers, and ſo much Reſt ſhall they all have by the Way, as

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is enough to refreſh their Spirits, to recruit their Strength, to enable them to ſtruggle through all Oppoſitions to that exceeding weight of Glory, to which all theſe Sufferings are not worthy to be compared, or compared, ſhould ſeem light. Yea, all theſe Things work together for your Good, they do but bow you down, and humble you at the Feet of *Jeſus*, in a fit Poſture to receive the Crown of Life at his Hand. Call to mind then, that *God* dealeth with you as with his beloved Children, he whippeth you up out of your Beds of Sloth, that you may finiſh your Journey before Death benight you; he correcteth you that he may make you good and do you good. *Lazarus* had a great Load of Evils in this Life, ſuch as laid him at the rich Man's Gate, and moved the very Dogs to pity; but *God* had ready for him an eternal Reſt in *Abraham*'s Boſom, where he that would not relieve him muſt envy him, *Luke* xvi. Do not then ſo undervalue your Reſt in Heaven in the Preſence of *God*, as to be dejected for want of a little Reſt from ſhort Afflictions here. But learn by the Grievouſneſs of theſe, as you now feel and account them; what a Value to ſet upon that

that Love, and the Effects of it, thoſe *Sufferings* of your bleſſed *Jeſus* whereby he hath redeemed you from the Torments of eternal Fire.

Let us now Diſpute no longer with ourſelves, but ſet our Hearts at Reſt in the *God* of our Salvation : Let us come with all Joy and Cheerfulneſs, and caſt ourſelves into the loving Imbraces of our bleſſed *Jeſus*, who alone can and will bring us to *his Father*, and *our Father*, *his God*, and *our God*, with whom we ſhall for ever be, and in whom we ſhall enjoy an endleſs *Sabbath: We ſhall reſt from our Labours, and our Works ſhall follow us.* Amen.

F I N I S.

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Mat. vii. 13, 14. *Enter ye in at the ſtrait Gate; for wide is the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth to Deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*

Becauſe ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth unto Life, and few there be that find it.

Ver. 21. *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

By C. ELIS,

Author of *The Gentile Sinner.*